



THE INFLUENCE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF LEVEL FIVE HOSPITALS IN KENYA - THE CASE OF VIHIGA COUNTY REFERRAL HOSPITAL

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Abstract:

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the influence of career development strategy on employee performance of level V hospital, case study of Vihiga referral hospital. The study was carried out in Vihiga county referral hospital. The study was guided by a two-factor theory of motivation-hygiene. The study used a descriptive research design. The study employed a census sampling technique where the target population was used in the study. Primary data was collected by use of questionnaires. The data was analyzed through inferential statistics. Inferential statistics were represented through regression analysis and correlation analysis to determine the quality of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The findings of the study were presented using tables. The study results indicated that career development strategy has a positive and significant effect on the employee performance of level V hospitals in Kenya.

Keywords: career development strategy, employee performance, level V hospitals

1. Introduction

An employee career can be characterized as a range of jobs held over the course of a lifetime. An individual career is the ongoing development of their knowledge, experience, and skills in a particular line of work. Even though a person's career is generally described as the sum of all the jobs they hold during their whole life, it has a deeper and more expansive meaning. The training for fulfilling the expectation, aim,

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emotion, and wishes related to their job position is also part of an individual's career. This training enables them to advance in their workplace with the knowledge, skill, quality, and desire to work (Knott, 2016).

According to Mark and Nzulwa (2018), career development refers to an ongoing chain of activities or an enduring and lifetime process aimed at advancing one's professional trajectory. The term often pertains to the management of one's career within an organizational context, whether it be within a single organization or across multiple organizations. Career development encompasses various aspects such as acquiring new skills through training, assuming increased job responsibilities, transitioning to a different career path within the same organization, or seeking employment in a different organization. Career development is a continuous and structured endeavor undertaken by an organization to enhance and cultivate its human resources, taking into consideration the requirements of both the employees and the organization itself (Chen, Chang, & Yeh, 2006).

Career development strategies facilitate the advancement of all employees within an organization, starting from their initial stages of employment. Additionally, it aids in the identification of career trajectories and the elimination of any barriers impeding the advancement of employees. Furthermore, it enhances operational efficiency within the firm by offering training programs to employees, thereby promoting career stability and facilitating professional mobility (Niati, Siregar, & Prayoga, 2021). According to Rahayu, Rasid, and Tannady (2019), career development holds significant value for both individual employees and organizations. This phenomenon occurs due to the reciprocal relationship between the employee's organization and their professional growth and advancement within the organization. Employees enhance their career trajectory by consistently acquiring managerial or professional abilities and gaining relevant experience.

Career development is a strategic endeavor undertaken by organizations to ensure the availability of individuals possessing the requisite skills and experience at the time of requirement (Lis, Wahyuddin, Thoyib, & Ilham, 2022). By employing a career development approach, companies have the opportunity to provide guidance and support to employees in their individual career-planning endeavors. This approach enables employers to gain insight into the aspirations and goals of their workforce, thereby facilitating the effective allocation of human resources based on the realization of employees' career plans. Therefore, career development is commonly understood as a collaborative endeavor including both the individual employee and the company, aiming to bridge the disparity between present and anticipated future performance levels. According to Parola (2020), the alignment of organizational career management strategies with employees' pre-joining expectations can lead to increased levels of commitment, satisfaction, and motivation.

Public hospitals in the modern era find themselves functioning within a competitive landscape, necessitating prompt responsiveness to the dynamic demands of their clientele in order to maintain relevance in the swiftly evolving market. The hospitals

prioritized the implementation of widely acknowledged methods for evaluating performance, fostering ongoing improvement, and being responsive to the needs of patients, clinicians, the community, and stakeholders. Hospitals served as primary hubs for public service delivery, education of healthcare professionals, and pivotal clinical research for aspiring individuals in the medical industry (Gile, Buljac-Samardzic, & Klundert, 2018).

Managing a hospital is a challenging task that requires a comprehensive understanding of its administrative structure, unique operational conditions, and surrounding environment. The complexity arose due to the implementation of intricate functions, the acquisition and selection of personnel possessing advanced skills, the provision of improved facilities, and the transition from a centralized to a decentralized healthcare system. The Health Sector in Kenya was governed by a comprehensive Health Policy. The Kenya Health Policy 2012/2030 outlined strategic plans aimed at ensuring substantial advancements in the health status of Kenya. This was in accordance with the requirement set down by the Constitution of Kenya in 2010 (Kenya Constitution, 2010).

The management of a hospital is a multifaceted task that requires a comprehensive understanding of its organizational structure, unique administrative requirements, and surrounding environment. The complexity arose due to the implementation of intricate functions, the acquisition and selection of personnel with exceptional skills, the supply of improved facilities, and the transition from a centralized to a devolved healthcare system. The Health Sector in Kenya was governed by a comprehensive Health Policy. The Kenya Health Policy 2012/2030 outlined strategic plans aimed at ensuring substantial advancements in the health status of Kenya. This was in accordance with the requirement set down by the Constitution of Kenya in 2010.

It is important to acknowledge that employee performance plays a critical role in an organization's ability to sustain its efforts toward achieving predetermined objectives, particularly within a competitive context. The prevalence of emerging concerns among enterprises in the realm of human resources has necessitated a re-engineering of recruitment, training, retention, motivation, and reward strategies for their workforce. The strategic approach to economic challenges plays a crucial role in determining the future viability of any sector within an economy. The level V hospitals, which are integral to Kenya's economy, necessitate a workforce comprised of highly competitive and high-performing individuals (Mark & Nzulwa, 2018).

2. Statement of Problem

The healthcare industry is presently confronted with numerous issues that are impeding the provision of services to the population. These challenges encompass labor strikes and work slowdowns, inadequate equipment and infrastructure, as well as insufficient human resources, among other factors (Choge, 2020). Based on the findings of a survey conducted by the World Bank in 2013, it has been observed that a large number of public hospitals in Kenya have encountered considerable deficiencies in patient care and a lack

of harmonious interactions between patients and healthcare personnel. The present circumstances in the public hospitals within Vihiga County indicate that deficiencies in service delivery and instances of discrimination have contributed to disruptions in service provision and overall poor employee performance (World Bank, 2013). Most studies conducted on level v hospitals have focused on strategic welfare services of employee and the studies on career development has focused on employee of county governments. Less studies have been done on the influence of career development strategy on employee performance of level v hospitals in Kenya. Therefore, this study seeks to evaluate the effect of career development strategy on employee performance in level V hospitals in Kenya.

2.1 Objective of the Study

To evaluate the effect of career development strategy on employee performance of level v hospital in Kenya (Case study of Vihiga county referral hospital).

2.2 Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: Career development strategy has no significant effect on employee performance of level v hospital in Kenya (Case study of Vihiga county referral hospital).

3. Literature Review

3.1 Theoretical Review

This section provides a discussion of key theories relating to career development strategy.

3.1.1 Two-Factor Theory of Motivation-Hygiene

The Two-Factor Theory by Herzberg (1966), also referred to as the motivation-hygiene theory, has its exploration based on employee satisfaction in organizations. The theory proposes that hygiene and motivational factors are responsible for the satisfaction and discontentment of employees. Factors for motivation are those aspects of the job that lead people to focus on performance in their work and give staff the performance standards that are expected in the organization. Factors for motivation are those well thought out to have a direct relationship with the work done. Guha (2010) the factors are inclusive of the working atmosphere aspect, for example, supervisory practices for pay, policies of a company, and other working conditions.

Herzberg's seminal study in 1966 revealed that the elements contributing to job satisfaction were distinct from those that led to job discontent. The theorist formulated the hypothesis in an attempt to provide an explanation for his findings. In his research, the author referred to the factors that contribute to either satisfaction or dissatisfaction as hygiene factors. The choice to use the term "hygiene" was influenced by the understanding that the factors aimed at employee maintenance primarily serve to prevent dissatisfaction, yet they do not effectively promote satisfaction. Filtvedt (2016) identified several key elements that contribute to employee happiness and subsequently

enhance employee performance. These factors include accomplishment, the nature of the job itself, opportunities for promotion, levels of responsibility, acknowledgment, and personal growth.

This notion pertains to the correlation between employee satisfaction and its significant impact on employee performance. Hence, it is hypothesized that employers must take into account hygienic considerations after fulfilling the basic prerequisites, such as providing a means of livelihood, in order to maintain employee satisfaction and enhance employee performance (Bevins, 2018). This theory was found to be relevant to the present study since it suggests that firms should prioritize the provision of motivators, such as non-financial incentives like career development opportunities, in order to enhance employee performance.

3.2 Empirical Literature Review

In 2021, Muthumbi and Kamau investigated the impact of career development on employee performance at Deloitte Limited in Kenya. The study used quantitative approaches for a descriptive survey. This survey targeted 500 Deloitte Limited, Kenya employees. A stratified random sample of 116 respondents was selected. Data was collected via structured questionnaires. The data was examined using descriptive and inferential statistics. Inferential statistics measured study variables' relationships using correlation and regression. The study found that career development improved employee performance significantly. Career development positively and significantly influenced employee performance.

In a study conducted by Mark and Nzulwa (2018), the researchers examined the impact of career development programs on the performance of employees at the National Hospital Insurance Fund headquarters in Nairobi. The research employed a case study design. The research focused on a population consisting of 402 employees at the offices of the National Hospital Insurance Fund in Nairobi. A sample of 120 participants was selected, representing 30% of the total population. The sample was chosen with the stratified sampling technique. The researcher gathered primary data through the utilization of a questionnaire. The research utilized a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics to display and analyze the collected data. The results of the study indicate a robust and statistically significant influence between career development programs and employee performance.

In a study conducted by Sellar (2022), the impact of training and career development on the performance of executives in private banks located in the Colombo district was investigated. The research utilized a quantitative methodology, in which questionnaires were sent to investigate the study's aims. The data utilized in this study were obtained from a sample of 150 executives employed in private banks located in the Colombo region. The statistical tools employed for data analysis included the mean, standard deviation, correlation analysis, and hierarchical regression analysis. The study findings suggest that career development has a notable and favorable influence on employee performance.

Muchibi, Mutua, and Juma (2022) examined how career development affects employee engagement in Kenya's public health system. The descriptive research design was influenced by positivism and deductive reasoning. The target population was 3,092 with 342 respondents from two cohorts of 35 doctors and 307 nurses. The sample was selected using stratified and basic random sampling. A questionnaire was utilized to collect quantitative and qualitative data. We employed a mixed technique approach to analyze data utilizing quantitative and qualitative methods. Inferences were based on correlation, basic, and multiple linear regression. Career development has a moderate and considerable favorable effect on public health personnel engagement in Kenya.

Nasution, Mariatin, and Zahreni (2018) conducted research to investigate the role that employee performance plays in the relationship between career growth and corporate culture. In this study, a quantitative technique was used, and there was a total of 242 participants who were permanently employed by Bank Pembangunan Daerah. The findings of the statistical research revealed that career advancement opportunities and the culture of the firm both had a favorable and significant influence on employee performance.

4. Conceptual Framework

This section shows the theoretical relationship between career development strategy and employee performance in public hospitals in Kenya as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

5. Study Methodology

The present part provides an overview of the research methodologies employed in the conducted study.

5.1 Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive research design. The application of a descriptive research technique enabled the collection of data regarding the influence of career development strategies on the performance of employees in level V hospitals in Kenya.

5.2 Target Population

The study was centered on a cohort of employees from Vihiga county level V hospital. The study encompassed a sample of participants consisting of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the hospital, 10 department heads, 15 nurses, 15 allied health professionals, and 20 additional staff members from the hospital

Table 1: Target Population

Category	Number
Chief Executive Officer	1
Department Heads	10
Nurses	15
Allied Health Professionals	15
Other Hospital Workers	20
Total	61

Source: Study Data (2023).

5.3 Sampling Technique

The methodology utilized in this study was census sampling. Consequently, the entire target population was included in the data collection process. The selection of this particular approach for the study was motivated by its ability to provide a higher degree of precision and reliability in the information obtained. This is primarily due to the inclusion of every unit inside the analysis, which ultimately contributes to the generation of impartial findings. A census is a comprehensive collection of data pertaining to all individuals within a certain population. The process of conducting a census is essential for the accurate and comprehensive collection of demographic data (Pandey & Pandey, 2015).

5.4 Data Collection Instruments

The study used questionnaires to collect data from the respondents of the study. Questionnaires are considered to be the most effective method for obtaining data due to its ability to ensure the privacy of respondents, so enabling them to provide responses that are both honest and unbiased (Pandey & Pandey, 2015).

5.5 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation

The gathered data underwent a series of procedures including cleaning, organizing, coding, and analysis using SPSS version 27. Inferential statistics were employed to generate statistical data. Both multiple regression analysis and correlation analysis are components of inferential statistics. The data was presented using tables. The regression model 3.1 presented below was utilized to ascertain the extent of the relationship between career development strategy and employee performance.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon \tag{3.1}$$

Where:

Y- Employee Performance

β_0 - Constant

β_1 - Regression Coefficients

X - Career Development Strategy

ε - The Error Term

6. Data Analysis, Results, and Discussions

This part encompasses an analysis and interpretation of the results obtained from the study.

6.1 Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis was conducted in order to examine the association between the variables under investigation. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlational Analysis

	X ₁	Y
X	1	
Y	0.712*	1
	(0.016)	

Source: Study Data (2023).

The results of the correlations between the independent and dependent variables are shown in the table above under the heading "Independent Variables." According to the findings, the career development strategy (X) has a positive and significant link with the employee performance of level V hospitals in Kenya. This is supported by $r = .712$ and $p=0.016$.

6.2 Model Summary

In the model summary, the level of the relationship that can be found between the independent variables and the dependent variables will be provided. The multiple correlation coefficient R demonstrates that there is a linear correlation between the projected values of the dependent variable and the anticipated values that the observed model generates. As demonstrated in Table 3, the coefficient of determination, also known as the R square, reveals the degree of variability in both the independent and dependent variables.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.621 ^a	.513	.515	.428

Source: Study Data (2023).

Table 3 displays an R-value of 0.621, which indicates a statistically significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. R squared = 0.513 suggests that the career growth strategy is accountable for 51.3% of the variance in employee output. The remaining 48.7% of variations in worker performance can be attributed to factors outside the scope of the model. According to the adjusted data from the R-squared statistic, the proportion of this population's variance that can be explained is calculated to be 51.5%.

6.3 ANOVA

ANOVA is used to examine differences in means across categories. The results of the study are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.621	4	1.8114	5.413	.007 ^b
	Residual	21.135	57	0.3843		
	Total	31.756	60			

Source: Study Data (2023).

The relationship between career development strategy and employee performance in level V Hospitals in Kenya is presented in Table 4. The statistical analysis conducted at a 95% confidence level reveals a p-value of 0.007, which is less than the predetermined significance level of 0.05. This indicates that the overall model provides solid evidence to support the assertion that career development strategy greatly affects employee performance.

6.4 Regression Analysis

Table 5 presents the regression coefficient of the independent variable, which serves to clarify the impact independent variable on the dependent variable.

Table 4.1: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	0.334	.148	2.257	.002
X	0.197	.068	2.897	.001

Source: Study Data (2023).

The regression equation of the study is:

$$Y = 0.334 + 0.197X$$

The constant 0.334 in the regression model equation indicates that the employee performance of level V hospitals in Kenya will be 0.334 if the career development strategy is not adopted. The study's primary goal was to analyze the impact of level V hospitals in Kenya's emphasis on career development on employee productivity. This goal was based on the null hypothesis that there is no significant effect between career development strategy and employee performance. The regression analysis in Table 5 shows that a career development plan significantly affects employee performance at Level V hospitals, with a p-value of less than 0.05 and a regression coefficient of 0.197. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the study was rejected, showing that a unit increase in career development strategy leads to a subsequent increase in employee performance of level V hospitals by 0.197 units. The study results are in agreement with Muchibi, Mutua,

and Juma, (2022) whose study findings indicated that career development has a positive and significant influence on employee engagement.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

This section presents the conclusions and recommendations derived from the investigation.

7.1 Conclusions

From the study findings, it was found that career development strategy has a positive and significant influence on employee performance in level V hospitals in Kenya. Therefore, the study concluded that career development strategy has a positive and statistically significant influence on employee performance in level V hospitals in Kenya.

7.2 Recommendations

It is recommended for organizational management to incorporate career development strategies, such as employee training programs and seminars. This approach can enhance employees' skills and competencies, thereby fostering increased motivation, productivity, and the provision of high-quality services. Ultimately, these efforts contribute to the overall success of the organization. The report further suggests that hospitals should proactively address and rectify the existing deficiency in terms of professional advancement chances. It is not advisable for individuals who have received training to remain stagnant in their current employment positions. In order to mitigate the risk of stagnation inside an organization, it is imperative for management to actively support and enable consistent career advancement by expanding the scope of promotional prospects and generating fresh avenues for skilled and capable personnel. Potential strategies for addressing the issue may involve organizational reorganization, job enlargement, creating alternate career paths, and enhancing retirement incentives.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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