

EFFECT OF MOTIVATION IN EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE KENYA'S CIVIL SERVICE

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Abstract



The concept of employee motivation has been a perennial subject of debate among scholars. Motivation does affect and continues to affect employee performance in organizations that leads to low performance. This paper seeks to examine selected motivational issues that affect employee performance in the Kenyan civil service. Motivation plays a critical role in the overall performance and growth of organizations. Most of the employees in the civil service exhibit low motivation to certain extent contributes to the minimal performance. The government of Kenya through its ministries since the early 1990's has come up with strategies towards performance improvement.



These issues do not only affect the Kenyan civil service but also other developing economies. As such, managers continue to be preoccupied with the search of strategies and measures to be taken to improve and increase employee performance. This is done with sole objective of enhancing employee performance. However, the underlying factors of demotivation continue to threaten every gain that the management in organizations make. Yet it has been argued that demotivated employees can nullify sound organizations. This paper seeks to examine the selected motivational factors affecting employee performance with reference to Kenya's civil service.



The paper is structured based on the following areas: How remuneration affects employee performance in the civil service. How working environment affects the employee performance in the civil service, employee training and development that affect employee performance in the civil service, the impact of organizational culture on the employee performance in the civil service. This paper is expected to shed more light to the top management on issues and strategies related to employee motivation in civil service especially in the context of developing economies like Kenya. Key words: Employee motivation, civil service, employee performance.



Introduction

The concept of motivation is widely discussed and reviewed thematic area in human resource management domain. The term motivation may be described as a predisposition to behave in a purposeful manner to achieve specific, unmet needs and the will to achieve the inner force that drives individuals to accomplish personal organizational goals (Williams, 2001). According to this definition, motivation can thus be seen as a key factor of employee performance and therefore, a major component of production in an organization.



In characterization, content and hygiene are the two key factors used to characterize motivation. Shanks (1998) notes that content factors are those that focus on work. These include achievement, work itself, advancement, recognition, responsibility, and growth. On the other hand hygiene factors as indicated by Doyle (2004) are those factors which relate to job dissatisfaction. These include the company, organizational policies, administration, salary, status, job security, working environment, personal life, and interpersonal relations.



The issue of employee motivation and performance especially in the civil service cuts across various countries in Africa, Kenya included. Service provision in the sector in the continent has not been that effective. Service delivery is characterized by unwarranted delays. Such delays in the provision of services may be attributed to various factors such as poor management and de-motivated staff among many other issues. Most of the employees in the civil service lack motivation and this to a certain extent contribute to the minimal performance of the sector especially in developing economies like Kenya. Such delays in the provision of services may be attributed to various factors such as poor management and de-motivated staff among many other issues.



Most of the employees in the civil service lack motivation and this to a certain extent contribute to the minimal performance of the sector especially in developing economies like Kenya. Owing to the fact that lack of motivation among the staff may influence their output, this paper examines the key motivation-related factors that are likely to affect an institution's overall performance with reference to Kenya's Civil service. These factors include employee remuneration, working environment, employee training and development and the organizational culture. The paper also presents the way forward on improving motivation of employees for enhanced performances in the civil service.

Remuneration and Employee Performance



Remuneration is one of the general factors known to many as to have an effect on the performance of employees in any given set-up or organization. This has to a certain extent created a perception among the human resource professionals that employees consider pay to be the most important thing in their career (Brown, 2002). When employees are motivated through attractive remunerations, their performance of work tremendously increase. According to Armstrong (2000), the basic requirements for job satisfaction may include comparatively competitive pay, equity, real opportunities for promotion, participative management, degree of social interaction at work and interesting work with relative control over work pace and work methods.



Employee satisfaction of work depends on expectations and the environment in which they work. Employees with favourable pay structures are motivated to produce more while low pay leads to low motivation that translates to low performance.

Armstrong (2006) notes that money provides the carrot that most people want. Money is the primary motivator to most people because it increases one's purchasing power. Herzberg listed money as a hygiene factor rather than a motivator. For example, when people get fixed salaries or rates of pay they do not get a lot of satisfaction from it. A good example is the civil service salary structures in the country.

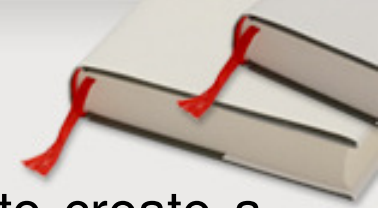


However, different people have different needs and wants and definitely money motivates them differently. Koontz (2000) and Rao (2001) also pointed out that money should not be considered the primary motivator at the expense of other factors such as challenging work and favourable managerial and organizational climate. Money will always have a central place in any motivational programme because it is a secondary reinforcer. The remuneration that one earns plays a fundamental role in motivating an employee towards improved performance. As such, management in the civil service need to be reviewing the remunerations that their employees receive. This is due to the fact that revised remunerations contributes to some extent in motivating them to perform better at their places of work.

Working Environment and Employee Performance



The environmental working condition does affect employee performance. This is whereby most employees find it not conducive and effective for their working as well as professional growth. Moreover, things like age, gender and ethnic discriminations have provided a set back in the productivity of employees in the civil service. It needs to be noted that the working environment greatly affects performance of an employee. Good working condition helps to boost employee's morale, improves the organization's productivity hence service delivery.



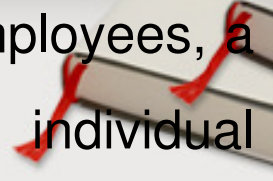
Creation of tasks that are beneficial to the company pays to create a good working atmosphere since every employee wants to feel that their job is making a difference and will work towards accomplishing the task. High Performance can be achieved through a good working environment. This can be done by ensuring that majority, if not all, of the employees' tasks have a direct benefit or contribution to the overall success of the organization. Strategically created tasks that directly affect the organization will energize and motivate the employee to bring out their best (Jensen, 2013). Poor working conditions in the civil service affect performance to a greater extent. This in turn also has an effect on the overall motivation of the employees.

As observed by Luis (2010), organisations should create an environment in which performance makes a difference. Otherwise it may end up with a low achievement of organisational performance culture. Before the introduction of performance contracting in the government institutions, the working environment was one of sluggishness and low productivity. However, the performance contracting concept has to some extent tried to turn around the environment into a more productive one. Employee empowerment which involves giving an employee the authority to make and implement some decisions plays a key role in the promotion of employee morale to work.





This is due to a fact that it enables employees to use more of their potential, but it also requires a commitment on the part of managers to delegate not just some of their responsibilities, but some of their decision-making authority as well. However, managers must then ensure that empowered employees have the skills, abilities, tools, and information to make good decisions. In the working environment, managers have an obligation to motivate their employees because poorly motivated employees can nullify the soundest organization.

A stack of three books with red ribbons is positioned in the top right corner of the slide. The books are slightly offset, showing their spines and pages. The ribbons are tied around the books, and the overall appearance is that of a small library or a collection of reference materials.

Depending on the nature of the organization and type of employees, a manager can motivate his/her employees by recognizing individual differences, matching people's skills with relevant jobs, ensuring jobs are perceived as attainable, individual rewards, linking rewards to performance, checking the system for equity and recognizing money as potential motivator (Nzuve, 2007). To enhance performance in the Kenyan Civil service, more needs to be done to turn around the perception and attitude of employees within the working environments.

Provision of resource on time, performance contracting, job equality (in terms of professional growth and promotions) and accountability need to be introduced so as to create a working environment that is productive centred.

Employee Performance, Training and Development




One key factor in employee motivation and retention is the opportunity for employees to grow and develop job and career enhancing skills. Employees should be given an opportunity to grow and develop. Training and development is one of the most important factors in employee motivation. This will articulate the opportunity to create, highly motivated, devoted, and growing employees who will benefit both the organization and themselves through training and development opportunities.



Thus, the continuous employee training and development has a significant role in the development of individual and organizational performance since the strategic procedure of employee training and development needs to encourage Internal training and development is vital because employees don't want to leave their work place this is vital because internal training and development brings a special plus. For instance, terminology, and opportunities reflect the culture, environment, and needs of the workplace. An employee should be supported to attend internally offered training opportunities. This can be done by a co-worker, a trainer or an expertise. External training is a must for skill development.



University attendance and attaining of degrees will enhance broadening of knowledge and capabilities of the staff and experience with diverse people and ideas (Heathfield, 2007). Thus, the continuous employee training and development has a significant role in the development of individual and organizational performance since the strategic procedure of employee training and development needs to encourage creativity, ensure inventiveness and shape the entire organizational knowledge that provides the organization with uniqueness and differentiates it from the others.



Despite of the crucial role played by any kind of training offered to an employee in any given work station, it is unfortunate that the procedures of employee training and development within the civil service or organizations are undeveloped. They are mainly performed occasionally, and not connected with organizational strategy, nor do they have some strategic significance. In addition, employees view the training as an imposed obligation, rather than a way to maximize their potential and they do not realize that by improving their performances and innovation of their knowledge they may contribute to better business results of the organization they belong to since most of them see that training is expense, rather than an investment worthy of investing.



Moreover, many of the managers in civil service are under the influence of prejudices such as: training is expensive, training is an expense burdening the current business, it is not rewarding and training is for the young without knowing that knowledge is expensive, but ignorance is even more expensive.



Organizational Culture and Employee Performance

Organizational culture is the personality of the organization. Culture is comprised of the assumptions, values, norms and tangible signs of organization members and their behaviors. Corporate culture can be looked at as a system. Inputs include feedback from various sources: society, professions, and values on competition or service (McNamara, 2000). In the Kenyan civil service, working culture has not been favourable leading to low productivity. This has been portrayed by the delay in completion of assignments, poor meeting of deadlines and long queues in the public institutions among many others. Moreover, the culture has also been dominated with corruption and malpractices which hinder the right channels of productivity.



It is evident that organizational culture issues are known to affect motivation of employees in various ways: An organization culture provides its employees with a unique values and beliefs. It is characterized by certain features and some sub-cultures. Moreover, much of the substance of culture of a given organization is concerned with controlling the behaviors and attitudes of organization members and the reward system is a primary method of achieving control. It specifies the contributions expected from members and expresses values and norms to which those in the organization must conform, as well as the response individuals can expect to receive as a result of their performance (Kerr and Slocum, 2005).



Some organizations do not place much value on motivation and innovation of the employees. Innovation doesn't happen on the way by, it must be designed (Farber, 2005). Outcome and team orientation is another organizational issue that influences motivation. Outcome orientation involves managers concentrating on results and outcomes rather than on methods used to achieve results. People orientation entails whether or not the managers deem the effects of decision-making outcomes on individuals in the organization to be relevant (Robbins & Langton, 2003). This has also been the case in the Kenyan Civil Service.



New employees are not given the right orientations in their places of work and thus they are not able to adequately fit in as required for realizing the institutional goals and objectives.

Organizations which have low or non-existent people orientation typically encounter more cynicism and distrust of management within the system while organizations with high people orientation are more likely to maintain loyal employees (Grinder, 2003). Team orientation can be interpreted or described as an aspect of the organization placing more emphasis on teamwork to accomplish work objectives and goals rather than an emphasis on individualized work (Robbins & Langton, 2003).



Ways of Enhancing Motivation among Employees for Improved Performance in the Civil Service

As it has been presented in this paper, the motivation of employees is generally affected by various issues such as remuneration, working environment, training and development and organizational culture. This also influences their performance. As such, to use these factors to the advantage of the civil service performance, there are various strategies that need to be put in place.

First and foremost, there is need for the Salary Review Commission(SRC) to regularly review the salaries of the civil service employees.. Moreover, the review should be based on the current economic situations so as to ensure that the employee is able to receive something considerate.



Stagnated salaries and the increasing economy of the country puts employees in the civil service under pressure and this affects their performance to a greater extent. Thus, the review of remunerations can go a long way in enhancing not only the employees' welfare but also the general performance of the civil service in the country.

Secondly, the government among other stakeholders in the civil service needs to create a positive working environment for its employees. The working environment for employees is critical to their success. To enhance the environment all the required resources and material for production need to be availed in time.



Moreover, insurance policies within the working environment need also to be introduced especially for those employees who work in environments which are risky. This encourages the employees to be even more dedicated in their work since they feel that they are all important and their health is also taken care of.

Moreover, policy frameworks on equality within the working premises need to be fully practiced. The issue of discrimination either based on gender, age or ethnicity at times makes one to feel unease in the working premise and this affects their performance in the long run.



Policies should be enacted which ensure that all the employees in the civil service despite of their age and gender have full access to promotion and professional growth in their places of work. There is need to recognize the diversity among employees for positive advantage. Additionally, the aspect of performance contracting needs to be adequately reinforced in the civil service. The incorporation of performance contracting will help the sector in clarifying the objectives of service organizations and their relationship with government, and to facilitate performance evaluation based on results instead of conformity with bureaucratic rules and regulations (Mallon, 1994; Islam, 1993).



Through the enacting of performance contracting, civil service will be able to create an organizational culture which is performance oriented and thus the improved performance of the employees. There is also need for technical training and development programs to be implemented across various professions in the civil service. On job training, should be introduced for the employees so as to equip them with the current skills and techniques required for enhanced performance in the current economic and digital era.

Conclusion



From the presentation, it is evident that there are a number of motivation-based factors affecting employees' performance in the civil service. These factors range from employee remuneration, working environment, employee training and development and organizational culture. Employee incentives, either monetary or non-monetary are key to performance. When performance is backed by an appropriate incentive system, it can also help shift organizational focus from inputs to outputs and outcomes and, consequently, improve efficiency and effectiveness (Schiavo-Campo & Sundaram, 2001).



Stronger performance orientation in Kenya's civil service can be enhanced by addressing the key employee motivation issues. While performance can be regarded as complex because it also entails a subjective dimension, in terms of results, it is important for the Kenyan authorities not to neglect entirely the subjective effort but recognize it in appropriate ways through offering better employee incentives, creating better working environment, focusing on employee training and development and creating conducive organizational culture.

Thank you !

