

Relationship between Employee Communication and Performance: Analysis of Public Health Organizations in Homa-Bay County

Esther A. Oyier*
Student Maseno University

Dr. Christine Anyango Bando (PhD)
Lecturer, Department of Business Administration
Maseno University

Abstract:- Health is a Global concern to each and every one of us. According to Kenya performance rate of ministry of health, vision (2014-2030), the Country average health system performance of 47 counties stands at 69.72% with Homa-Bay County having 42.69%, the last position in the whole Country. The main cause of this poor performance in Homa- Bay County is not known. Literature has given various suggestions that performance in organizations can be improved through succession planning, job design, work place recognition, dialogue and problem solving among others. How employee communication influence performance has not been established particularly Homa-bay county. Therefore, this study sought to establish the effects of employee communication on performance of public health organizations in Homa-Bay County, Kenya. The study was guided by Systems Theory and Komal and Tahir's Model of Employee Participation. In a correlational study involving 384 health workers in Homa-bay County. Data was collected through the use of a five point Likert scale, self-administered questionnaires which was tested for both validity and reliability. It was established that employee communication had a positive significant effect on organizational performance ($\beta=.313$, $p<.05$). Based on the objectives and results of the study, the study concluded that improvement on performance of government health organizations is a function of employee communication. The study recommended that management to encourage increased level of employee communication in work related decisions and incorporation of employee views in organizational performance to create employee sense of belonging and ownership of the organization. The study findings may be of help to employee voice managers, human resource managers, county governments, and other researchers or academicians.

Keywords:- Communication, Employee Participation, Organizational Performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication refers to efforts made by a person in obtaining a meaningful judgment. It can take the form of oral, written or something it can be actualized using body language (Erika & Bala, 2017). Employers strive to promote communication through employee voices that encourages genuine two-way dialogue. Measuring employee engagement can also reveal how well an employee communication is structured in an organization. Hambley, et al. (2014) argues that the communication can be individual, collective or both. It is essential that there is organizational culture which creates an environment where employees feel safe to speak out, and empowered to suggest new ways of working. This communication makes it possible for the organization to function as one whole unit despite its existence informs of parts and sub parts.

Makamara, (2016) posit that communication should strive to align business policies and procedures to provide better opportunities for people to have a meaningful communication at work by assessing how job design, organizational processes, values and behaviors can be developed. Effective employee communication within a business is the frequency at which employees are participating in discussions around key decisions and changes. A good communication within the company will make employee endeavor in their respective role and functions, making employees responsible in their job (Kagwiri, 2017).

Dundon and Rafferty (2018) proposed that the most obvious form of communication is the traditional model of collective voice – trade unions. This is highly effective as long as it is based on positive partnership working and mutual respect. Structured communication satisfies employees' self-actualization needs hence increasing employees' motivation and job performance. When management communicate with their employee effectively their individual attributes such as job satisfaction, commitment to the organization and improved productivity is enhanced. The end result is seen in organization's better performances (Torka et al., 2010).

Communication is very influential on employee performance because good communication will give employees a sense of job satisfaction. That way employee will pursue work in accordance with the assigned task without any misunderstanding.

Makhamara et al., (2016) investigated the influence of strategic employee voice on employee performance in the health sector in Kenya. On the other hand, Sadeghian et al., (2018) purposed to identify the components of employee pro-socially voice and the effect of staff empowerment on it in the municipality of Mashhad. More studies are as well available around the subject of employee voice management within organizations. Dwomoh (2012) examined how employee voice contributes to the performance of companies using Electricity Company of Ghana as a case study. Anyango, Ojera and Ochieng (2015) who sought to clarify the meaning of employee voice and explain its implications in organizational context.

In the recent decade, global health community has put concerned efforts towards achieving efficient and effective health coverage. Kenya not exception has continually struggled to balance the need to generate revenue at healthcare facilities through the imposition of user fees with the need to reduce barriers to healthcare. Homa-Bay County public health organizations being one of the Kenyan counties that offers health services at 42.69% that is below the country's average scale of 69.72% Barasa et al., (2021). Clear evidence on the influence of employee voice management on organization performance, particularly among public health organizations is inevitable. Hence there is need to put concern and effort towards achieving efficient and effective health coverage through a research on the influence of employee voice management on organizational performance (Constantin, 2015).

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Systems theory was originally proposed by Hungarian biologist, Bertalanffy (1950). The foundation of systems theory is that organizations are viewed as open systems, continually interacting with their environment. These parts that share communication among each other can be looked at as consisting of four aspects namely: inputs which comprise resources such as raw materials, money technology and people; processes such as planning, organizing motivating and controlling; output such as products and services enhanced systems productivity. This implies that communication occurs between and among systems in the organization. This communication makes it possible for the organization to function as one whole unit despite its existence informs of parts and sub parts. In the above analysis, systems theory is significant because it emphasizes on examining communication and its relationship with employee performance within an organization context. Komal and Tahir's model is a function of job satisfaction, employee commitment and employee productivity. The proponents of this model states that by having employee participate in decision making, the organization will be able to improve the employee individual attributes such as job

satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and improved productivity. Torcka et al., (2010) supports this argument by so saying that, participation in decision-making can satisfy employees' self-actualization needs hence increasing employees' motivation and job performance. Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge (2012) argue that by having employee participate in decision making, the organization will be able to improve the employee individual attributes such as job satisfaction, commitment to the organization and improved productivity. These outcomes are measurements of organizational performance and are directly related to organizational performance.

III. EMPIRICAL LITERATURES

Constantin and Baiasa (2015) did a study which focused on the role played by the employee voice in an organization. The study revealed that a good internal communication has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance. Communication also depends on knowing and taking into consideration the opinions of the employees and if ignored can end up in lack of motivation, resignation, and eventually leaving the organization in favor of the competition. People's attitude towards the working place is extremely important as it influences the efficiency of the organization. The effectiveness of the employee voice depends on effective information sharing. Well informed employee voice will certainly increase the level of employee engagement. Confidence in management can lead to an increased employee commitment. The implications of adopting an informed employee voice approach to internal communication are significant and a proof that the value of communication is understood.

Sadeghian et al., (2018) purposed to identify the components of employee pro-social voice and the effect of staff empowerment on it in the municipality of Mashhad, the second largest city in the northeast of Iran. The research method used is a mixed method. The design of the research is the exploratory mixed because firstly the qualitative method is performed and then, based on the obtained results. The statistical population of this research in the qualitative section is all employees of Mashhad municipality who have at least three years' work experience in Mashhad municipality and have officially expressed at least 20 times their pro-social voice which according to the adequacy of sampling, people were interviewed. The Colonize method was used to analyze the interviews, and as a result, the components of the pro-social voice were extracted from the staff. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis indicated that all components of the pro-social voice positively significant. The comparative fit index (CFI) of the model also was estimated 0.881 using the Amos software, which indicates the fitness, presented of the model. The results showed that employees' empowerment affects pro-social voice of employees.

Torre, Gritti and Salimi (2021) adopted an integrated approach to employee voice (EV) and analyzed the impact of direct and indirect EV mechanisms on firm innovation in small and medium-sized firms separately. It also proposed a new categorization for direct EV, by distinguishing between

verbal and written mechanisms, allowing us to take the level of formality of different EV mechanisms into account. The analysis of 17,890 European firms shows that verbal, written and indirect EV mechanisms are all positively related to a higher propensity of firm innovation in both small and medium firms with 1% significance level. The results also reveal that medium firms derive higher benefit than small firms while combining and balancing EV mechanisms with different levels of formalization, that is, verbal and indirect voice.

Anyango, Ojera and Ochieng (2015) sought to clarify the meaning of employee voice and explain its implications in organizational context. They contended that the meaning of employee voice has attracted several definitions without any agreement. Some scholars have suggested that voice is a difficult, non-predictable and elusive concept while to others it is simply participation of employees. The meaning of employee voice remains poorly understood in organizations. Understanding and interpretation of the concept is crucial as this will help policy makers, managers and scholars design effective policies and voice mechanisms that can help institutions achieve their goals. The paper looked at various definitions of employee voice, mechanisms used in organizations and its importance. It revealed that there is a small significant effect of voice on job satisfaction in security firms.

The studies above have all dwelt generally on meaning of voice, speaking up, direct and indirect communication and managerial responses to voice behavior. These studies do not comprehensively cover employee communication, particularly in the context of employee voice management as a practice on voice. As such, the researcher will want to assess the influence of employee communication on performance, particularly among public health organizations in Homa-Bay, Kenya.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

Where; Y = performance of public health organization

β_0 = The constant or coefficient of intercept.

X_1 = Employee Communication.

X_2 = Joint Consultation

X_3 = Collective Bargaining

ϵ = Error term

β_1, \dots, β_3 = Corresponding coefficients for the respective independent variables.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The study used correlational analysis design to study health facilities in Homabay County. This design helped the researcher to examine the association between employee voice management and organizational performance (Etikan & Bala, 2017). The study targeted a population of employees from Homa-Bay County on health care services sector. The target population of this study was 56 doctors, 607 nurses, 189 clinical officers and 137 operatives. This made the total population of the study to be 989 employees. Therefore, as a unit of observation this choice of health employees was justified since they were directly affected by employee communication. The study employed a stratified sampling technique because the target respondents consist of different categories of employees. Primary data was collected using self-administered semi structured questionnaire developed by the researcher to respondents. Secondary data was collected from other past data that had been collected and tabulated through graphs, charts and reports. The questionnaire was pre-tested with 10 respondents consisting of 2 doctors, 4 nurses, 2 Clinical officers and 2 operative staffs before its administration to ensure validity and reliability of the data to be collected. The validity tests were conducted by use of face validity and content validity. To measure reliability, Cronbach alpha (α) was used where all the set of variables in the questionnaires gave a Cronbach alpha statistics of more than 0.7, thus the threshold value were met (Sekaran, 2003). Multiple linear regressions were conducted to establish the inferential statistics and to assess the relationship between employee communication and organizational performance. The regression model Fairchild and Mackinon (2009) and Whisman & McClelland (2005) was adapted in the study as indicated below.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was to assess the influence of employee communication on organizational performance in the public health organizations in Homa-Bay County, Kenya. This was measured using a set of items on a five-point Likert scale and the results presented as shown in table 1 that follows using means and standard deviations.

Statements on employee communication Deviation	Mean	Standard
• We are given feedback on service quality that we have offered to clients.	3.20	0.62
• We are motivated on good performance via promotion	3.26	0.72
• We are informed on area that needs further training and development activities.	3.40	0.81
• We are given information on areas that we need to improve	3.36	0.88
• We are given information on services that we have done so well and encouraged to continue.	3.28	0.85
• We are allowed to give suggestions on how to make our work easier.	3.02	0.71
• We are allowed to suggest on what to do to help the organization improve.	2.96	0.73
• We are allowed to suggest on the mode of training and development to be done.	2.81	0.72
• We are allowed to suggest on training and development Activities.	3.09	0.74
• Our suggestion on how performance review is to be done is taken into consideration	2.95	0.73
• We have a what sup group to communicate with our Managers	3.15	0.81
• We are able to communicate to our managers via phone Calls	3.27	0.97
• We can send information within the organization through e-mails	2.81	0.76
• We can communicate within the organization using teams	3.08	0.64
• We are able to hold meetings with the management via a link.	2.76	0.77

Table 1:- Employee Voice Management through Communication.

From the findings in table 1, it is clear that management has been rated high in giving feedback on service quality that employees have offered to clients (M=3.20, SD=0.62), as well as motivating employees on good performance via promotion (M=3.26, SD=0.72). according to high rating, (M=3.40, SD=0.81), management gives information on area that needs further training and development activities, information on areas that they need to improve (M=3.36,SD=0.88) and also information on services that they have done so well and are encouraged to continue (M=3.28, SD=0.85). further findings shows that there is high rating on being allowed to give suggestions on how to make their work easier (M3.02, SD=0.71), but low rating on being allowed to suggest on what to do to help the organizational improve, (M=2.96, SD=0.73), as well as being allowed to suggest on the mode of training and development activities (M=2.81, SD=0.72), however there was a high rating on being allowed to suggest on training and development

activities, (M=3.09, SD=0.74), management did not take into consideration their suggestions on how performance review is to be done, (M=2.95, SD=0.73). Findings further showed that there was high rating on their communication via what up group that they could use to pass their information (M=3.15, SD=0.81), make phone calls (M=3.27, SD=0.97), and use teams (M=3.08, SD= 0.64). However, there is low rating on holding meetings with management via a link (M=2.76, SD=0.77), and sending e-mails (M=2.81, SD=0.76).

Organizational performance was the main dependent variable measured on a five likert-point scale. Fifteen statements were used to evaluate organization performance which was measured through employee Retention level, Job satisfaction and Quality service delivered. The responses are shown in table below.

Statements on Organizational Performance.	Mean	Standard Deviation
• I understand the long term plan of the hospital	3.41	0.66
• I feel part of a team working towards shared goals	3.05	0.79
• If I do good work I can count on being promoted	2.98	0.80
• I am satisfied with the opportunities for professional improvement at the hospital	2.97	0.70
• I am given enough recognition by management for work that is well done	3.05	0.90
• Communication system is informative and provide immediate feedback	3.19	0.85
• I am provided with enough equipment by the organization to do my job well	3.21	0.81
• My organization has up to date equipment and facilities	2.85	0.75
• The physical facilities such as bathrooms and rooms are always clean	3.35	0.93
• I am able to serve my patients on time.	3.20	0.64
• Employees do keep patients' records accurately.	3.32	0.49
• Patients feel safe in transaction with organizational employees.	3.00	0.85
• Treatment is explained to the patients very clearly	3.10	0.76
• Employees are polite during admission procedures.	3.31	0.92
• I pay personal attention to all patients equally irrespective of their status	4.30	0.77

Table 2:- Organizational Performance

Under organizational performance, the findings shows that, Most of the respondents agreed that; they understand the long term plan of the hospital (M=3.41, SD=0.66), as well as feeling part of a team working towards shared goals (M=3.05, SD=0.79), there was a high rating on them being polite during admission procedures (M=3.31, SD=0.92), they do keep patients' records accurately (M=3.32, SD=0.49), moreover they are able to serve their patients on time (M=3.20, SD=0.64), they agreed that they are provided with enough equipment by the organization to do their job well (M=3.21, SD=0.81), findings further showed that Patients feel safe in transaction with them (M=3.00, SD=0.85), there was a high rating on explaining treatment very clearly to the their patients (M=3.10, SD=0.76), The management ensured that physical facilities such as bathrooms and rooms were always clean (M=3.35, SD=0.93), there was a high rating on their Communication

system which provided immediate feedback (M=3.19, SD=0.85), the management gave them enough recognition for work that they did well (M=3.05, SD=0.90), however there was a low rating on being promoted if they did good work (M=2.98, SD=0.80), being satisfied with the opportunities for professional improvement at the hospital (M=2.97, SD=0.70). It can thus be seen that the highest mean value of (M=4.30, SD=0.77) shows that they pay personal attention to all patients equally irrespective of their status whereas the lowest mean value of (M=2.85, SD=0.75) shows that their organization has no up to date equipment and facilities within the organization. From the frequencies on employee communication and organization performance, descriptive statistics was conducted after individual construct mean was calculated and the findings captured in Table 3.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Employee Communication	343	3.43	.191	-.148	-.243
Organization Performance	343	3.74	.331	.282	-.462
Valid N (listwise)	343				

Table 3:- Descriptive Statistics

From Table 3, employee communication had a mean of 3.43 which means that most of the respondents were undecided. Its standard deviation was 0.191 meaning that there was no strong deviation from the mean. The level of skewness (at -0.148) gravitated towards zero implying that this construct was normal. The size of kurtosis (0.243) is an indication of a very thin tail. On organization performance, the mean is 3.74 meaning that most of the respondents agreed to the questions asked. Its standard deviation is also 0.331 meaning that there was no strong deviation from the overall mean. The level of skewness (at 0.283) gravitated towards zero implying that this construct was normally skewed. The size of kurtosis (-0.462) is an indication of a very thin tail.

		Organization Performance
Organization Performance	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Employee Communication	Pearson Correlation	.417**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N		343

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

Table 4:- Correlation Analysis Results

From Table 4, there is a weak but significant positive correlation between Organization performance and employee communication (r= 0.417; p=0.001). Between joint consultation and organization performance, there is also a weak yet significant association (r=0.291; p= 0.000). Similarly, there is a weak yet positive association between collective bargaining and organization performance (r=0.380; p=0.000).

➤ *Regression Analysis of employee communication and performance*

Linear Regression analysis was employed to predict organizational Performance from employee communication. Model summary shows the coefficient of determination (R²) which tells us the percentage of the variation in organizational performance

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			Durbin-Watson	
				R Square Change	F Change	df1 df2 Sig. F Change		
.417 ^a	.174	.171	.301	.174	71.599	1 341	.000	1.112

a. Predictors: (Constant), Average Employee Communication

b. Dependent Variable: Average Organization Performance

Table 5:- Model Summary; Employee Communication and Performance

From the results shown in table 5, the regression model containing employee communication as the independent variable explains 17.4% of the variation in organizational performance these results confirms the output of the correlation that a direct and a meaningful connection between the relationship arrangement and the dependent variable whereas the regression model shows a F statistics of 71.599 and a p-value of 0.000 therefore the proposed model is statistically important in estimating the dependent variable, since the p-value is smaller than the Alpha value (P < .05). Durbin – Watson statistics is 1.112, lying below 1.5. This is an indicator of a positive autocorrelation between employee communication and organization performance.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.263	.293		4.310	.000		
Employee Communication	.721	.085	.417	8.462	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Average Organization Performance

Table 6:- Coefficient on employee communication and organization performance

Table 6 of coefficients presents the unstandardized and standardized coefficients of the model, the t statistic for each coefficient and the associated p-values. Findings indicate that a unit change in employee communication significantly increases organization performance by 0.721 (p=0.000).

Given that the objective was to assess the influence of employee communication on performance of public health organizations in Homa-Bay County, results indicated that employee communication significantly and positively

influenced the performance of the public health organization in the study area. A unit change in it leads into public health organization's performance increasing by 0.541; p =0.000. This finding is in agreement with Constantin and Baiasa (2015) study which focused on the role played by the employee voice in an organization which was positively significant. Sadeghian et al., (2018) identified the relationship between components of employee pro-social voice and staff empowerment in the municipality of Mashhad, Iran to be positively significant. Torre, Gritti and Salimi (2021) who studied integrated approach to employee voice (EV) and

analyzed the impact of direct and indirect EV mechanisms on firm innovation in small and medium-sized firms separately. The findings revealed a positive but weak significant level between the variables. Anyango, Ojera & Ochieng (2015) revealed that there is a small significant effect of employee voice on job satisfaction in security firms. The study employed cross-sectional survey type of correlation design. Furthermore, the finding supports systems theory which emphasizes on examining communication and its relationship with employee performance within an organization context. However, these majored on explaining the meaning of voice, speaking up, direct and indirect communication and managerial responses to voice behavior. These studies do not comprehensively cover employee communication, particularly in the context of employee voice management as a practice on voice. Furthermore, the current study used primary data backed by secondary data in health sector where communication is elemental but the above studies only used primary data.

VI. CONCLUSION

The objective of the study sought to assess the influence of employee communication on performance of public health organization in Homa-Bay County. Majority of the respondents agreed that they were informed on a number of areas that needed further training and development activities, improvement, services that they had done so well and were motivated via promotion on good performance. Whereas some of the respondent disagreed that they were able to hold meetings with management via a link, send the information within the organization through an e-mail, suggest on; how performance review is to be done, what to do to help organization improve and the mode of training and development activities. On the other hand majority of the respondents agreed that they were able to communicate to management using teams, what up groups, phone calls and were given feedback on service quality that they had offered to patients. It was concluded that employee communication had a positive and significant effect on performance of public health organizations in Homa-Bay County. It was recommended that: Public health Organizations should enhance their employee communication by allowing employees to give suggestions on what to do to make their work easier, suggest on the mode of training that may be good to them, also to suggest on how performance review is to be done, to give responses to e-mail sent to them and lastly, to hold meetings via a link to cater for those who are not able to make it to the meetings.

REFERENCES

[1]. Anyango, C., Ojera, P., & Ochieng, I. (2015). Meaning and application of employee voice. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Innovative Technology*, 2(5), 10-16.

[2]. Barasa, A., & Julie, J. (2021). Cost Effective and Resource Allocation. 7(3), 19-78.

[3]. Constantin, E. C., & Baias, C. C. (2015). Employee voice-key factor in internal communication. *Pro-Social and behavioral science*, 9(1), 975-978.

[4]. Dundon, T. A., Wilkinson, A., Marchington, M., & Ackers, P. (2004). The meaning and purpose of employee voice. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15(1).

[5]. Dwonoh, G. (2012). The relationship between employee voice and organizational performance at electricity company of Ghana. *European Journal of Business Management*, 4(6).

[6]. Gollan, P. J. (2010). *Employer strategies towards non-union collective voice. The Oxford handbook of participation in organizations*. London: Oxford University Press.

[7]. Holland, P., Pyman, A., Copoper, B. K., & Teicher, J. (2011). Employee voice and job satisfaction in Australia: The centrality of direct voice. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 50, 95-111.

[8]. Kagwiri, L. (2017). Effective communication on organizational performance. A case study of National Hospital Insurance Fund, Nairobi. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 4(5), 21-40.

[9]. Kothari, C. R., & Garg, G. (2008). *Research methodology, methods and techniques*. (2nd, Ed.) New Delhi: Washua Prakasha Publishers.

[10]. Makamara, F. H., Waiganjo, E. W., & Kwasira, J. (2016). Influence of strategic employee voice on employee performance in the health sector in Kenya. *The startegic Journal of Business and Change management*, 3(3), 362-380.

[11]. Ngethe, J. M., Iravo, M. E., & Namusonge, G. (2012). Determinants of academic staff retention in public universities in Kenya: Empirical Review. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(13), 205-212.

[12]. Sadeghian, S., Rahimnia, F., Shirazi, A., and Kaffashpoor, A. (2018). Investigating the Effect of Prosocial Voice on Psychological Empowerment of Employees. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 7(2), 191-202.

[13]. Torka, N., Schyns, B., & Looise, J. C. (2010). Direct participation quality and organizational commitment: The role of leader-member exchange. *Employee Relations Journal*, 3(2), 418-434

[14]. Torre, E. D., Gritti, Z., & Salimi, M. (2021). Direct and indirect employee voice, firm Innovation in small and medium firms. *British Journal of Management*, 32 (2021), 760-778.

[15]. Von Bertalanffy, L. (1968). *General System Theory; Foundations, Development, Applications*. Newyork; George Braziller