

Training Influence on the Performance of Mental Health Professionals in Selected Public Psychiatric Hospitals Kenya

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Abstract

Public hospitals have been struggling with issues related to low general performance and personnel productivity. Concerns have been raised about differences in study leave and training received by employees at public health facilities, which explain why employee performance is low. There are serious consequences when employee well-being is not addressed through good training. Failing to prioritize their training can result in increased rates of disengagement, absenteeism, and turnover. The objective of this study is to evaluate how training influence performance of mental health professionals. The study adopted mixed methodologies in a cross-sectional descriptive research design. About 146 mental health professionals, were sampled using stratified random proportionate sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select ten key informants. Content analysis was used on qualitative data, descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze quantitative data. The study findings show there is a correlation between training and employee relations ($r=0.584$, $p<0.001$), between training and appraisal ($r=0.529$, $p<0.001$), between training and remuneration ($r=0.415$, $p<0.001$) between training and performance ($r=0.280$, $p < 0.001$). This study recommends that in order to maximize employee performance, hospital management should prioritize the ongoing skill development of their staff. Only via ongoing training and development procedures is this achievable.

Keywords: Training, Influence, Performance, Mental Health Professionals

Introduction

According to Abdullahi, Gwadabe, and Ibrahim (2018), performance is the accomplishment or production in a productivity of system in the form of products or services. It gives the worker clear guidelines for every significant task. The observable activities and behaviors of employees provide an explanation of the requirements for a job as well as the expected outcomes for satisfactory job performance. In a global market, enhanced competencies, expertise, and abilities of the skilled labor force have demonstrated to be a significant source of competitive advantage (Mdhlose, 2020). Effective training programs are necessary for employees to acquire the necessary information, skills, and abilities to perform well on the job. These programs may also have an impact on employee motivation and commitment (Gerald, 2018).

Human resources planning efforts must include employee training and development because it not only maximizes individual returns but may also draw in better talent for the organization (Bakare, 2020). According to Vinesh (2021), it fully cultivates people's critical thinking skills and inventiveness for improved decision-making, customer service, managing of complaints, and general self-efficacy. Furthermore, employee training and development equips workers with the skills they need while switching from one type of task to another. At all health organizational levels, it is essential to produce high-quality work (Khuluvhe, 2023).

Employee training is regarded as the main motivator and essential component of productive work output. An extreme shortage of skills has traditionally been the deterrent to achieving excellent performance at work. According to Laing (2021), training and development is a deliberate process to alter behavior, attitude, knowledge, or skill via a learning experience in order to perform well in a variety of tasks. In the workplace, the main goals are to help people grow as individuals and meet the demands of the health organization both now and in the future. They went on to say that acquiring or imparting the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) required to perform a particular task or function is crucial in training and development.

In the current corporate environment, employee development is becoming more and more important and crucial in a variety of firms (Sheeba & Christopher, 2020). It is now undeniably true that companies must make ongoing investments in employee development if they hope to retain both their workforce and their business. Organizations and individuals can benefit from training and development in a strategic way. According to Sendawula, Kimuli, Bananuka, and Muganga (2018), during the previous three decades, staff training and development has become a significant educational endeavor. This rise is linked to the need in the workplace for workers at all levels to perform better in their current roles, get the skills and knowledge necessary to take on new roles, and advance their careers in a changing work environment.

According to Bakare (2020), employee performance is the sum of an employee's behavior at work and their ability to carry out their assigned responsibilities. It is seen as a crucial element in the success of a health organization (Karim, 2019). Usually, the firm sets performance goals for both individual workers and the entire health organization with the interests of providing patients with high value, reducing waste, and running smoothly. According to Utete (2023), health organizations should concentrate on enhancing workers' good performance by giving them the resources and competencies they need to handle changing circumstances and obstacles. Globalization, new market demands, innovation, and the intelligent economy,

he continued, are the primary obstacles and motivators for businesses looking to sustain and enhance employee performance.

According to Williams (2021), an employee's performance has a big influence on their longevity, internal promotion potential, and future employment prospects with different companies. Employee performance evaluations are techniques used by businesses to track a worker's performance over time. According to Ngema, Rajlal, and Utete (2022), various factors such as output quantity, quality, timeliness, presence or attendance, and efficacy of completed job are linked to performance. Otherwise, inadequate attention to a health organization's labor resources development may result in health organizational performance (Adanlawo, Nkomo, and Vezi-Magigaba, 2023).

Effective staff training of a health organization's human resources is linked to both short- and long-term returns, according to Siriwardena and Morais (2019). Enhancing performance through training boosts organizational and individual competencies. In order to gain a competitive edge, it is also essential to unlock possible growth and development prospects. Employees can gain strong competencies and skills for utilizing newly introduced technology by participating in training programs that introduce them to modern technology. Training makes it easier for workers to keep up with new skills and fosters a sense of well-being, dedication, and community inside the health organization, all of which improve a health organization's ability to compete. Additionally, they noted that a key factor in raising health organizational productivity is training. He went on to say that studies have unmistakably demonstrated the effectiveness of training in helping businesses achieve their objectives and achieve high levels of productivity and performance. According to Mamy, Shabbir, and Hasan (2020), training and development are more crucial in today's world because they concentrate on improving an individual's ability to perform their current job and developing the necessary skills and abilities while also fostering positive attitudes and immediate behavior changes that boost worker performance within a health organization. Studies show that in order for employees to acquire the necessary information, skills, and abilities to perform well on the job, effective training programs are needed. These programs may also have an impact on employee motivation and commitment (Utete, Zhou & Ajani, 2022; Mdhlose, 2020).

According to Utete (2021), the success or failure of a health organization is dependent on how well its strategies for training and development are implemented. Consequently, better employee performance depends on staff development and training. The majority of health organizations in Kenya believe that employee performance can only be improved through training and development. According to Ahmed (2020), training and development are a component of an integrated system where performance is assessed in relation to predetermined standards. He went on to say that the success of training and development plans would empower stakeholders to take the lead in raising employee performance through effective plans for training and development.

According to Awan, Habib, Akhtar, and Naveed (2020), having highly skilled workers is essential to an organization's success. It has been demonstrated that workers with significant training and development are the most effective and productive. These personnel groupings are known as the "cream of the crop" because they frequently have the biggest stake in the success of the health organization. When staff education, training, and development are coordinated appropriately, the health organization can reap significant benefits in terms of increased knowledge, productivity, loyalty, and contribution.

Employee performance will have an impact on the health organization's overall performance. Performance refers to the extent to which a person completes tasks in their line of work and, based on outcomes, shows how well they are carrying out the requirements of their position. Thus, in order to guarantee good performance, the health organization must invest in its personnel. Workers are an organization's most valuable resource. They contribute actively to a organization success, which should not be undervalued. Therefore, in order to maximize job performance, equipping these special assets through proper training becomes essential. Through training, management should also position them to meet the demands of the cutthroat corporate environment of today.

In order to gain commitment, senior management needs to provide a work environment that includes opportunities for engagement and effective performance evaluation. This will make committed workers less likely to quit and more likely to perform at higher levels (Tuffah, 2020). According to Gerald (2018), performance is the result of work since it has the strongest connection to the health organization al customer satisfaction economic destinations and strategic aims. According to Mdhlose (2020), performance is the degree to which a person satisfies the expectations on how they should operate or behave in a specific setting, situation, job, or circumstance.

Performance is how employees behave in accordance with health organization policies. According to Shaw (2019) performance is defined as the metrics pertaining to the handling of a specific request or the act of accomplishing something successfully; it is important to distinguish between employing knowledge and just processing it. According to Siriwardena and Morais (2019) performance is something that an individual leaves behind and that exists independently of the purpose. It is defined as the manner in which a health organization, its terminology, and the people who work there behave.

For workers in general and health workers in particular, employee training while on the job has presented significant challenges. Institutions' and employees' performance is impacted by this circumstance. Employee performance is positively impacted by training since it develops skills, knowledge, abilities, competencies, and behavior that benefits the employees as well as the health organization they work for. On the other hand, no research has been done on how on-the-job training affects mental health personnel's performance. Thus, the goal of this study was to look into how training affects mental health professionals' performance

Methodology

The study adopted cross-sectional descriptive research with mixed methods approach in generating rich information to help fully explore the study objectives. The study was conducted in Mathari National Teaching and referral hospital and Gilgil Mental Hospital. The study targeted population include 230 mental health professionals drawn from consultant psychiatrist, psychiatric nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists and medical social workers. Stratified random proportionate sampling was used to select a sample of 146 respondents from the target population. Purposive sampling was utilized to select two psychiatric hospitals and ten key informants who included: two chief psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, counselling psychologists, occupational therapists and medical social workers. Data was collected using questionnaires and Key informants interview schedules. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analyzed using

inferential and descriptive statistics for quantitative data and qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis.

Results And Discussions

Demographics Results

This section discusses the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents to include gender, age, highest completed qualification, workstation, profession and duration worked in the hospital. See Table 1.

Table 1: Social-demographics characteristics of respondents

	Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	96	70.1
Male	41	29.9
Age		
20 to 29	32	23.4
30 to 39	40	29.2
40 to 49	25	18.2
50 and above	40	29.2
Qualifications		
Certificate	2	1.5
Diploma	49	35.8
Higher Diploma	33	24.1
Undergraduate	32	23.4
Masters	20	14.6
Doctorate	1	0.7
Workstation		
Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital	112	81.8
Gilgil Hospital Mental Health Unit	25	18.2
Professions		
Consultant Psychiatrist	7	5.1
Psychiatrist Nurses	103	75.2
Social Workers	5	3.6
Occupation therapist	9	6.6
Counselling psychologist	13	9.5
Tenure of Service		
1-5years	62	45.6
6-10 years	29	21.3
11-15 years	11	8.1
16-20 years	13	9.6
Over 20 years	21	15.4
Total	137	100

Out of 137 study respondents who participated in the study, 96(70.1%) were female and 41(29.9%) were male. This is an indication that female's respondents were the majority in mental health professionals. The age of the respondents varied from 20-39 years and 50 years and above. Majority of the respondents were in the age brackets of 30 to 39 years at 40 (29.2%) and 50 years and above were 40 (29.2%). This is an indication that the age of the professionals were middle age and retirement age. This may have an implication on the desires for training as well as training needs may be differing. Also, aspiration as well as productivity in terms of performance may be affected by age of the respondents. Age-related differences in training requirements have an impact on the techniques used to help employees grow and perform better at work by increasing their knowledge and abilities. The age of trainees influences their comprehension of the fundamental knowledge required to carry out a particular work, as well as their abilities and knowledge to improve their job performance (Sheeba & Christopher, 2020). It is worth noting that while 40(29.2%) of health professionals working in the selected mental health are over the age of 50 years thus the need to focus on younger professionals to ensure service delivery continuity and succession planning. The findings are corroborated by a human resource audit conducted in both county and national government in 2021 titled Capacity Assessment and Rationalization of the Public Service (CARPS) report (MOH CARPS Report, 2021) which reported that the Kenyan public service is faced with an aging workforce where 31% of staff were aged between 50 and 59 years while 30% are in the age bracket of 40 to 49 years.

Regarding education status, 2(1.5%) were certificate holders, 49 (35.8%) were diploma holders and 33(24.1%) had Higher National Diploma. On further analysis, 32(23.4%) were undergraduate degree holders, 20 (14.6%) had a master's degree and 1(0.7%) had a doctorate. Approximately 82 (60%) of the respondents had their highest qualifications at ordinary and higher national diploma level. These results tally with the health workforce survey (MOH, 2021) that reports that a majority of frontline health workers in Kenya are trained at diploma level.

Data analyzed on various professions of sampled cadres of mental health professionals with reference to the respondent's profession, psychiatrists represented 7 (5.1) % of the respondent's majority 103(75.2%) were nurses and 12(8.8%) were clinical psychologists furthermore 9(6.6%) were occupational therapists and 5(3.6%) were social workers. The professional training may dictate the training needs as well as the specialized in-service training. According to Zhao, et al., (2020) people who require training and the type of training required will be identified through a successful analysis of training needs based on their professional trainings. The researcher also indicated that giving training to people who don't need it or the incorrect kind of training is ineffective.

On the issue of tenure of service, 62(45.6 %) of the respondents had worked in their respective hospitals for less than five years. while those who had worked for 6 to 10 years were 29 (21.8%), those with 6 to 10 years of service were 29 (21.2%), while those with 11 to 15 years were 11(8.1%). Furthermore, 13(9.6%) have worked for 16 to 20 years and 21(15.4%) had for more than 20 years. Majority, 91(66.4%) have worked for less than 10 years in their respective facilities and therefore are well informed, experienced about the processes and working in mental health unit. The work experience may have an impact on the training needs. One of the KII indicate that *"training needs and desires are based on the on experience and years offered service in the hospital organizations since different cases of mental health are reported every year in different manifestations"*. This observation concurs with Shaw (2019) studies which indicates that nearly 65% of companies, think that recognizing talent gaps, work experience in the workplace is crucial

for organizational success. Three levels are typically the focus of any examination of training needs: the corporate, occupational, and individual levels. Every one of these three crucial stages has importance and influence.

Assessment of Training Practices in Mental Hospitals

The first objective sought to assess the influence of training practices on performance of mental health professions in mental hospitals in Kenya, with a focus on training needs assessment, staff training opportunities and continuous professional development. The results are shown in Table 2. From the study findings on the issue of training needs assessment 59(43.1%) of the respondents agreed while 24(17.5%) strongly agreed with the statement that their hospital always carried out a training needs assessment annually. On the statement that the process used to identify my training and professional development needs is effective 48(35.0%) agreed while 28(20.4) disagreed. On the statement staff training calendar is prepared each year based on the findings of the training needs assessment 52(38.0%) agreed while 28(20.4%) strongly disagreed. Employers must perform a skills gap or training requirements analysis to accurately identify the precise training needs of employees in order to avoid addressing inaccurate training needs. This study's results have implications for systems for identifying the correct training needs. One of the key informant respondents reported that, *"a health care organization must conduct skills gap analysis to ensure that correct training needs are identified"*. *Employee brainstorming sessions can also be productive. This will help both the employer and the employee prevent skill mismatches caused by employees receiving the incorrect training.* Another key informant responded reported that: *"Hospitals must conduct skills gap to determine exact training needs." Hospitals may publicize training programs and encourage staff members to apply. Instead, than making them attend training against their will, it's ideal when they express interest.* The findings are also consistent with the research of Aba and Enyioko (2017), who discovered that assessing training needs is an essential first step in staff training planning.

On the issue of staff training opportunities 42(30.7) of the respondents strongly disagreed while 31(22.6) disagreed with the statement that they attended a training sponsored by the hospital in the last one year with a mean of 1.563. This is an indication that most of the staff in the mental health facilities rearing get staff training opportunities. On the statement that I am satisfied with the investments the hospital makes in staff training 39(28.5) of the respondents strongly disagreed while 33(24.1) disagreed with the statement. One of the key informants indicated that: *"many public hospitals in Kenya do training in order to meet regulatory requirements and earn scorecard points for performance contracts. While most counties have no budgets for staff training most of the health care professionals rarely gets an opportunity to be trained by the hospitals, they work with due to constraints budgets. Also, older generations tend to take training seriously, younger generations of freshly recruited employees occasionally attend training programs to earn with no discernible reason and find that the training is ultimately ineffective for them"*. The study findings contradict with Zhao et al.'s (2020) research on training and development, which indicates that staff trainings are essential as well as a requirement for hospitals and healthcare providers to be accredited and licensed by their respective regulatory organizations.

On the issue of continuous professional development, the respondents reported on the statement that they are satisfied with training opportunities for professional growth 45(32.8%) of the respondents disagree while 29(21.2%) strongly disagree with the statement. On the statement that the hospital has a mentorship

and on job training program 35(25.5%) of the respondents disagreed while 24(17.5%) strongly disagreed with the statement. On the statement that the hospital involves staff in decisions regarding CPD 33(24.1%) of the respondents disagreed while 26(19.0%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. One of the key informants indicated that: *“the greatest approach is on-the-job training, particularly since it doesn't require the employee to miss work. While performing the task, he will pick up the necessary skills. Although there are other approaches, in this organization, on-the-job training is the most successful one. This approach is specifically used for personnel who are unskilled or semi-skilled. Depending on the type of training they are doing, the practical method of delivering training is the best in this organization,”* Another key informant indicated that: *“if the training requires more knowledge, a classroom setting may be more effective; but, if the work is practical, then learning can occur more effectively through hands-on experience”*. The findings are consistent with Siriwardena and Morais, (2019) training and development research, which showed that staff training is essential for organizations looking to develop employees for advancement and development. According to Tuffah (2020) study on employee training, theoretical understanding of workplace components must be improved through classroom instruction.

Table 2: Assessment of Training Practices in Mental Hospitals

Statement	SD n (%)	D n (%)	U n (%)	A n (%)	SA n (%)	Mean	Std. dev
Training Needs Assessment							
We always carry out a training needs assessment in our hospital annually.	15(10.9)	28(20.4)	11(8.0)	59(43.1)	24(17.5)	3.36	1.288
The process used to identify my training and professional development needs is effective.	19(13.9)	28(20.4)	25(18.2)	48(35.0)	17(12.4)	3.12	1.266
In the last 12 months my identified training and development needs were met.	23(16.8)	43(31.4)	24(17.5)	34(24.8)	13(9.5)	2.79	1.257
A staff training calendar is prepared each year based on the findings of the training needs assessment	28(20.4)	24(17.5)	23(16.8)	52(38.0)	10(7.3)	2.84	1.23
Training helps me in improving the way I do my work in the hospital	12(8.9)	8(5.8)	6(4.4)	46(33.6)	63(56.0)	4.04	1.248
Staff Training Opportunities							
Training opportunities are aligned to my job description	14(10.2)	23(16.8)	10(7.3)	55(40.1)	29(21.2)	3.37	1.303

Selection of staff for in-service training opportunities is based on a training policy.	19(13.9)	33(24.1)	21(15.3)	45(32.8)	19(13.9)	3.09	1.297
I have attended a training sponsored by the hospital in the last one year	42(30.7)	31(22.6)	3(2.2)	35(25.5)	26(19.0)	2.80	1.563
I am satisfied with the investments the hospital makes in staff training	39(28.5)	33(24.1)	22(16.1)	27(19.7)	14(10.2)	2.59	1.363
Continuous Professional Development (CPD)							
The hospital involves staff in decisions regarding CPD	26(19.0)	33(24.1)	22(16.1)	35(25.5)	17(13.1)	2.90	1.350
The hospital offers continuous professional development sessions regularly	12(8.8)	32(23.4)	14(10.2)	48(35.0)	30(21.9)	3.38	1.300
The hospital has a mentorship and on job training program	24(17.5)	35(25.5)	20(14.6)	43(31.4)	15(10.9)	2.83	1.310
Am satisfied with training opportunities for professional growth	29(21.2)	45(32.8)	15(10.9)	32(23.4)	12(8.8)	2.65	1.304

Testing relationship of employee training and the performance of mental health professionals

In determining whether there exists a relationship between the study variables involved in the study, a correlational analysis was carried out. The findings in table 3 demonstrates that the relationship between the independent variables (Mental health professionals training) and the dependent variable (mental health professional's performance) were moderately correlated and statistically significant. The correlation between training and employee relations was ($r=0.584$, $p<0.001$), between training and appraisal ($r=0.529$, $p<0.001$), between training and remuneration ($r=0.415$, $p<0.001$) between training and performance ($r=0.280$, $p < 0.001$). From the study results the health care professionals training have a relationship with their performance. The results are in line with those of Mamy, Shabbir and Hasan, (2020), who discovered that training and development enhances profitability and fosters more optimistic views toward profit orientation. According to a study by Sheeba and Christopher (2020), offering job knowledge and skills at all organizational levels boosts employee morale and helps them identify with the objectives of the company. The findings are consistent with Shaw (2019) research, which showed that employee growth and training benefits both the organization and the individual worker. In a study on performance and training, Vinesh (2021) discovered that following training, employees become more motivated since they are skilled at what they are doing and find it enjoyable. When workers are content in an organization, they are typically motivated and the outputs increases.

Table 3: Correlation coefficients

Correlation Coefficients		Training	Employee Relations	Appraisal	Rewards	Performance
Training	Pearson Correlation	1	.584**	.529**	.415**	.280**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.001
	N	137	137	137	137	137

Multiple Linear Regression Results

The objective was to assess the influence of training on performance of mental health professionals in Kenya. When employee relations, appraisal system and rewards were held constant, failure to provide one-unit of opportunities in training led to a decline in performance by 0.059 which was statistically not significant ($\beta = -0.059$ [$p=0.42$]). Therefore, if our predictor(training) is reduced by one unit then our model predicts a decline in mental health professional's performance by 5.9%. This finding means that if there is no coordinated approach to train the health workforce on a continuous basis through both short-term and long-term programs, on job training and mentorship there will be a decline in the performance of mental health professionals. The findings mirror those of Zhao et al., (2020) who investigated the effect of training on job competence and satisfaction among primary healthcare providers in China township hospitals and found that the competency of nurses was not statistically associated with training.

Table 4: Regression Model

Variable	B	Se	T	Sig	95% CI		Tolerance	VIF
Training	-0.059	0.073	-8.1	0.420	-0.203	0.085	0.619	1.615

Conclusion and Recommendation

From the study findings when employee relations, appraisal system and rewards were held constant, failure to provide one-unit of opportunities in training led to a decline in performance by 0.059 which was statistically not significant ($\beta = -0.059$ [$p=0.42$]). Therefore, if our predictor(training) is reduced by one unit then our model predicts a decline in mental health professional's performance by 5.9%. This study recommends that in order to maximize employee performance, hospital management should prioritize the ongoing skill development of their staff. Only via ongoing training and development procedures is this achievable.

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