



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i9/14465>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i9/14465

Received: 14 July 2022, **Revised:** 17 August 2022, **Accepted:** 24 August 2022

Published Online: 04 September 2022

In-Text Citation: (Omuhaka et al., 2022)

To Cite this Article: Omuhaka, L., Momanyi, G., & Abongo, B. (2022). Effect of Labour Mobility on Performance of County Governments in Western Kenya. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(9), 303 – 315.

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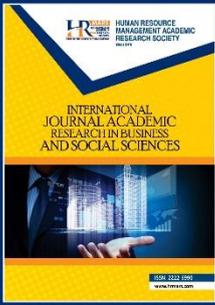
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Vol. 12, No. 9, 2022, Pg. 303 – 315

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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



www.hrmars.com

ISSN: 2222-6990

Effect of Labour Mobility on Performance of County Governments in Western Kenya

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Abstract

Labour mobility is an important and critical factor in the growth of an organization. When experienced workers leave, they do so with a lot of know-how which cannot be simply acquired through reading a manual. Mobility of labour helps increase efficiency and productivity of workers, incomes, reduces unemployment and enhances economic development. The 2019/2020 Kenya National Survey of counties reported indicated that performance of counties in western Kenya performance was below 50% in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. However, past studies investigated effects of individual constructs of Human Resources Succession Planning on performance, leaving composite effect unattended. The effect of labour mobility on effectiveness and efficiency of counties has not been fully considered. Therefore, this study investigated effects of labour mobility on effectiveness of county governments in Western Kenya. The study was guided by Dual Labour Market theory. It adopted a descriptive and causal research design. A sample size of 192 senior employees from the counties provided the primary data collected using questionnaires. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Using correlation and regression model, findings revealed that labour mobility positively and significantly affected performance with a coefficient of determination R^2 of 0.319; geographical mobility ($\beta=.440$, $p<.05$) and occupational mobility ($\beta=.181$, $p<.05$) and accounted for 31.90% variance in performance. Finally, it was concluded that, labour mobility has a significant effect on performance of counties in Western Kenya. The study recommends an improvement in labour mobility in order to enhance performance. It is recommended that counties embrace both geographical and occupational mobility as the main ways of improving efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery among Counties. The study also recommends comparative studies in the private sector, government parastatals and also other sectors since the findings of this study cannot be generalized for the other sectors.

Keyword: Labour Mobility, Performance, Geographical Mobility, Occupational Mobility, Effectiveness, Efficiency

Introduction

Labour mobility is the ability, and capacity of labour to move from; one place to another, one occupation to another, one job to another, or from one industry to another. Mobility of labour helps increase efficiency and productivity of workers when they move to occupations for

which they are suited the best (Campbell et al., 2011). Also, income increases due to the shift from low paying to high paying jobs. When workers move to places where they are wanted, issues of unemployment are solved. Further, out of labour mobility, economic development takes place due to unemployed labour shifting to public works like dams, roads, canals, etc. and to factories. Labor mobility therefore, increases production, income and employment.

Dual Labour Market Theory (Piore, 1979), posits that, a stable demand for immigrants' work that is inherent in developed countries' economic structure causes international migration. Low wages and high unemployment in immigrants' countries of origin are some of the factors that bring about immigration, while need for foreign labor exists in the host countries.

In capital-intensive sector, skilled workers use the best equipment and tools, and the employer is obliged to invest in these workers by providing expert training and education, because their work is difficult and calls for substantial knowledge and experience. Hiring primary sector workers is expensive, and this forces organizations to hold onto them, making the workers to stay, and in this context, their labour becomes the factor similar to capital. In labour-intense sector, available positions are; unstable, there are unskilled work positions, dismissal from work can happen any time with inconsequential or zero expenses to the employer. Therefore, labour and capital dual extend on labour in the form of the segmented structure of labour market.

This theory is relevant to this study because it is actually true that labour mobility is likely to increase if wages are low in an organization; if there are unstable working conditions; if the workplaces are not safe and if there is no possibility of professional improvement at the work place. It is therefore important to ensure that working environment is conducive and attractive to ensure talent retention because failure to do this increase labour mobility. High levels of labour mobility will definitely affect performance because the new employees coming into the organization will require time to adapt to the new environment before they can become productive thus affect performance.

A number of studies related to labour mobility and its contribution have also been conducted. For instance, Nyarko and Chartoum (2017), carried out a study on international labour mobility and its contribution to economic growth and development in Afghanistan. The study established that labour mobility brings in new skills that are essential to development and growth in the host country. It further established that remittances from savings by the immigrants are sent back to the home countries and this helps to ignite development and growth. Furthermore, when the immigrants retire and move back to their mother countries, they carry with them new skills they acquired and this can improve performance in organizations back at home.

Rubyutsa (2012), investigated diaspora remittances role in the development of Rwanda, and found 2006-2009 remittances to have contributed highly to Rwanda's income, positively influencing production and consumption. Formal and informal channels were used to affect remittances to family and friends. Informal channels of sending money are used to evade transaction costs and taxation of remittances. Money earned through diaspora remittances in Rwanda is used to finance health care, education, constructing houses, poverty reduction and other productive investments. Providing an examination of the importance of migratory

interactions and how remittances can be used to organize social capital, Caarls et al (2013), explicitly considers the role that migrants have played in the reconstruction of Rwanda. Their findings confirm that, migratory contacts have an influence in the reconstructive behavior and reconciliatory attitudes; however, financial transfers reduce participation in such activities.

Additionally, Fransen (2015) investigated the social-economic effects of remittances from the Diaspora in Burundi. Using the survey data, Fransen scrutinized the importance and effects of remittances for families in Bujumbura, and found out that, families that are considered wealthier, and whose relations have a higher-education, are more likely to receive remittances, a trend elucidated by the positive choice of this type of households into migrating to Diaspora. However, these remittances are mostly used for non-productive assets, while productive assets such as asset ownership and education, and were, however, not influenced by remittances. On social effects of remittances in Bujumbura, Fransen (2015) further investigated how money transfers affect social capital of the remittance-receiving households.

Betts et al (2014), investigated the value chain role and economic contribution of refugees, also called, "refugee economies". Ruiz and Vargas-Silva, (2016), observes that, in the context of the East African Community, it is hard to review immigration type from which remittance flow originate, because, they are often remitted through un-official networks. Study by Yang, (2008), explains how exchange rate appreciation in the countries of destination translates into effects in the Countries of Origin causing increased human capital, entrepreneurship, and capital-intensive household enterprises. McKenzie, et al (2014), that showed how shocks to GDP in the Countries of Destination translate to shocks within the Countries of Origin through migrant flows. Boschma et al (2009), indicate that there is strong evidence that labour mobility heavily contributes to regional economic growth. Rubyutsa (2012), investigated Diaspora remittances roles to Rwanda's development. Irving, et al (2010), on surveys of central banks on official balance of payments shows bigger growth impacts for countries with weaker financial systems, as the remittances and migrants abroad provide alternate methods of financing investments in their mother countries. Review of empirical literature above reveals that research work done on labour mobility was biased in favour of Geographical mobility. It is observed that Betts et al (2014); Ruiz and Vargas-Silva (2016); Yang (2008); McKenzie et al (2014); Boschma, et al (2009); Rubyutsa (2012); Irving, et al (2010), all concentrated on geographical mobility. The researcher hardly came across any study that dealt with effect of Occupational mobility on performance. More so, there is hardly any evidence of a study that has investigated the composite effect of both geographical and occupational constructs jointly.

Statement of The Problem

Labour mobility is an important and critical factor in the growth of an organization. When experienced workers leave, they do so with a lot of know-how which cannot be simply acquired through reading a manual. Knowledge transfer and experience should be transmitted to those replacing them before they leave. A survey by Info Track that ranked Kenya's 47 counties based on their performance in responsibilities assigned to the devolved units for the financial year 2019/2020 indicated that the general performance of counties was average. Previous studies and reports have attributed poor Performance of county governments in western Kenya to inconsistent financing from National Government and over

employment but have not been attributed to Labour mobility. Moreover, there is lack of adequate evidence on effect of geographical and occupational constructs of labour mobility effectiveness and efficiency of the counties. Both constructs have not been considered jointly. Therefore, it is not clear what effect labour mobility as a whole has on performance. Therefore, this study sought labour mobility effects on performance of counties in Western Kenya.

Objective of The Study

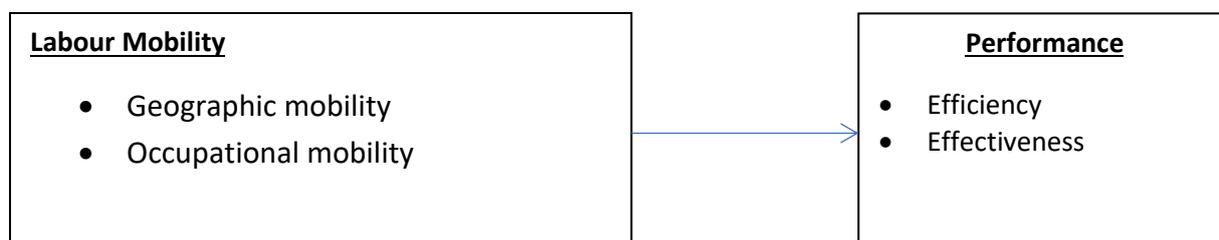
This study's overall objective was, to investigate the effect of labour mobility on performance of County Governments in Western Kenya.

Research Hypothesis

On the basis of the specific objective above, the study was guided by the following hypothesis H₀₁: Labour mobility has no significant effect on performance of County Governments in western Kenya

Conceptual Framework

Labour Mobility (LM) described by both Geographic and Occupational mobility is the independent variable. Thirdly there is Performance of County Governments which comprises two elements that include Effectiveness and Efficiency as dependent variable. It is expected that LM has an effect on performance in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. The conceptual framework is presented in figure below.



Source: Adapted from Bernthal & Wellins (2013); Cadena and Covak (2016); Lockwood and Ward (2013)

Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive and causal research design which was used to capture information based on data gathered. The researcher adopted this design because; it allows researchers to compare many, different variables concurrently; has several variables at the time of the data snapshot and finally, when using this design, various findings and outcomes can be analyzed to create new theories/studies or in-depth research. The study area was selected western Kenya region counties comprising Busia, Siaya, Vihiga, Homabay and Migori. The study targeted County Governments because counties are very important in economic growth of the county as they contribute 60 per cent of the Country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as per World Bank report released in February 2019 under the Kenya Accountable Devolution Programme in partnership with Kenya National Bureau of statistics. The study targeted western Kenya counties because the total contribution of the ten western Kenya counties which covers the former Nyanza and Western provinces contributed the least percentage of 16.7% to the GDP. The former Rift-valley province contributes 18.5%, former

Coast and Eastern provinces contributes 20.5%, former Central combined with North Eastern provinces contributes 22.6% and last but not least, Nairobi contributes 21.7%.

The study's target population was 370 senior employees of the selected County Governments in Western Kenya. The senior employees in counties include County Executive Committee members, County Public Service Board members, County Secretaries, Chief Officers, Directors and Deputy Directors. As senior staff, they make key decisions at the county level, have several staff reporting to them and have better understanding of the functioning of the respective County Government. Senior management is charged with making decisions affecting all employees as well as, determining the manner in which managers treat other staff and relate to each other, as this also affects organizational success.

For this study, the researcher selected a sample of 192 employees out of 370 employees who are in job group 'Q' and above. The total population was obtained from the Integrated Personnel and Payroll at the State Directorate Public Service Management as at 20th March, 2021. The researcher arrived at the Sample size of 192 through Taro Yamane's formula, $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(\epsilon)^2}$, where n = sample size, N = Population, 1 = Constant term, and ϵ = margin of error. The calculations were done basing on the figures $N=370$; 1 = Constant; and $\epsilon=0.05$ and therefore, $n = \frac{370}{1 + 370(0.05)^2}$ results to $n=192$. Sampling was done using proportionate stratified sampling technique to make sure that, each department and cadre was proportionally represented. Samples from each department/cadre were then chosen using simple random sampling. Purposive sampling was used in selecting Members of the County Public Service Boards, Chief Officers, Human Resource Directors, and Other Departmental Directors. The distribution of the sample was as shown below:

Through structured questionnaires administration, Primary data was collected and was used. The questionnaires were administered in person to employees of different cadres. Secondary data was collected through document review. Review was conducted on publications in the custody county governments and other institutions such as World Bank, National Treasury and other relevant organizations.

The researcher prepared data collecting instruments for collecting Quantitative data from respondents was collected using prepared collecting instruments. Preliminary visits were made in order to prepare for data collection. Due to the large number of respondents, five research assistants were recruited and trained to assist in administering the questionnaire on the respondents. Data collection schedules and route were prepared before seeking research permit from the County Secretaries of the respective counties to allow conducting the research in the counties. The researcher also applied for and got permit from NACOST to allow him carryout the research.

The questionnaire was developed from the research objectives of the study and was administered on employees. The research questionnaire had both open ended and closed items. Questionnaire reliability was assessed by testing internal consistency of the measures by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficients at a threshold of 0.7. To obtain data for this computation, a pilot study was conducted on 19 respondents as advanced by Connelly (2008), who observed that, a pilot study sample should be 10% of the sample projected for the larger parent study. The 19 respondents were not part of the actual study.

Reliability statistics based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient revealed that all the items were reliable Geographical mobility ($\alpha=.820$) and Occupational Mobility ($\alpha=.748$) were reliable. Validity was confirmed through the pretesting instrument on the selected experts and professionals and through pretest data analysis. Final data was cleaned and edited for completeness and accuracy.

disagreed. The mean and SD were high ($M=3.5$, $SD=1.2$) implying that on average, respondents agreed that there was inter-departmental transfer of staffs among the counties in western Kenya. The findings also indicates that there exists staff transfer arrangement from national government to the county governments as indicated by majority, 58(33.5%) of the respondents who agreed and 27(15.6%) who strongly agreed. A few of the respondents, 28(16.2%) however strongly disagreed, 36(20.8%) disagreed and 24(13.9%) remained neutral. Based on the high mean and SD ($M=3.1$, $SD=1.2$), it can be concluded that there exists staff transfer from the national government into the county governments.

It also emerged that the county government also allows external transfers of staff to the national governments as indicated by majority, 77(44.5%) of the respondents who agreed and 12(6.9%) who strongly agreed. The findings also shows that 40(23.1%) of the respondents were neutral over the statement, 20(11.6%) disagreed while 24(13.9%) strongly disagreed. Cumulatively, 51.4% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the county government allows external transfers of staff to the national government whereas 25.5% cumulatively disagreed or strongly disagreed. A high mean and SD ($M=3.2$, $SD=1.2$) indicates that county governments do not allow external transfer of staff to the national government. It can thus be concluded that the county governments of western Kenya does allow staff transfer to the national government. Another aspect of geographical mobility was inter-county transfers. According to the findings, majority 71(41.0%) of the respondents indicated that there exists staff transfer arrangements from other county government into their counties, and this was supported by 20(11.6%). From the findings, a high mean and SD ($M=3.2$, $SD=1.2$) confirmed that indeed there exists staff transfer arrangement from other counties into the counties in western Kenya. Further findings on the significance of inter-sub county staff movements and transfers revealed overwhelming results. Majority of the respondents, 91(52.6%) agreed that there is significant inter-sub county staff movement and transfers, which was also strongly agreed by 20(11.6%). On the contrary, the findings shows that 20(11.6%) of the respondents remained neutral, 30(17.3%) disagreed and 12(8.1%) strongly disagreed. The cumulative percentage of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed, 64.2 superseded those that disagreed or strongly disagreed, 25.4%. On average, a high mean and SD within one ($M=3.4$, $SD=1.0$) implied that there is significant inter-sub county staff movements and transfers.

Further findings were sought on the technical staffs from other counties; skilled personnel and employee influx from other counties were also tabulated. Results shows respondents majority, 62(35.8%) were neutral on whether technical staff or specialists are often hired or contracted from other counties or national government. However, 49(28.3%) disagreed while 24(14.5%) strongly disagreed. A significant number of respondents, 34(19.7%) agreed on the statement while 4(2.3%) strongly agreed. From these findings, a cumulative percentage of 42.8 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed as compared to 22.0% who agreed or strongly agreed. With a low mean and SD ($M=2.7$, $SD=1.0$), it can be concluded that technical staff or specialists are not often hired or contracted from other counties or national government.

Majority of the respondents, 65(37.6%) agreed while 28(16.2%) strongly agreed that the county governments often lose highly skilled personnel to the other areas or organizations, thus yielding a cumulative 53.8%. However, 33(19.1%) of the respondents were neutral, 36(20.8%) disagreed and 11(6.4%) strongly disagreed thus yielding a cumulatively 27.2%

respondents who disagreed and strongly disagreed. A high mean and SD ($M=3.3$, $SD=1.2$) were obtained implying that indeed, the county governments in western Kenya lost highly skilled personnel to other areas or organizations. Finally, the findings shows that there was no influx of employees from other counties into the county as indicated by majority, 84(48.6%) of the respondents who disagreed and 31(21.4%) who strongly disagreed. Thirty-two, 18.5% of the respondents however remained neutral, 17(9.8%) agreed and 9(5.2%) strongly agreed. A low mean and standard deviation ($M=2.2$, $SD=1.0$) shows that there is no influx of employees from other counties into the county.

Occupational Mobility

The second form of labour mobility was occupational mobility among the county governments in western Kenya. Resultantly, respondent's majority, 76(43.9%) agreed while 31(17.9%) strongly agreed that in the counties, staff are allowed to change occupations through re-designation. However, 28(16.2%) were neutral, 26(15.0%) disagreed and 12(6.9%) strongly disagreed. On average, there was a high mean and standard deviation ($M=3.4$, $SD=1.2$) implying that staff were allowed to change their occupations through re-designation in counties in western Kenya. Further findings on whether transfer and re-designations are affected without delay were also tabulated. From the findings, 52(30.1%) were neutral on the statement, followed by 51(29.5%) who disagreed and 10(5.8%) who either strongly agreed or strongly disagreed. On average, the findings show a low average and SD ($M=2.9$, $SD=1.0$) implying that there was delay in effecting transfer and resignations among counties in western Kenya.

The study also shows that majority, 56(32.4%) of the respondents agreed that labour mobility within the county governments interferes with staff appraisal system, and these were supported by 14(8.1%) who strongly agreed. Cumulatively, 40.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed whereas only a cumulative of 35.8% disagreed and strongly disagreed and disagreed. The mean and SD were high ($M=3.0$, $SD=1.2$) implying that labour mobility within the county governments interferes with staff appraisal systems. Another important aspect was lack of passion for performance among employees from other counties. From the findings, majority of the respondents, 74(42.8%) disagreed that employees from other counties lacked passion for performance while 29(16.8%) strongly disagreed. Therefore 59.6% of the respondents cumulatively disagreed and strongly disagreed and 8.7% agreed and strongly agreed leading to a low mean and small standard deviation ($M=2.3$, $SD=0.9$) that indicated a passion among employees from other counties to perform. Finally, the findings shows that clans or tribal linkages propelled labour mobility, as indicated by 61(35.3%) of the respondents who agreed and 24(13.9%) who strongly agreed yielding a cumulative 49.2%; however, 28.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed. On average, a mean of 3.2 and an SD of 1.2 indicate that clans or tribal linkages propelled labour mobility.

Effect of Labour Mobility on Performance of County Governments in western Kenya

Labour mobility was the second determinant of performance but acted as moderator as well. Therefore, in order to establish its effect on performance, a regression analysis was done.

Correlation between Labour Mobility and Performance of Counties in Western Kenya

Before the regression analysis, it was important to establish whether linear associations existed between its constructs and those of performance. The findings using Pearson product moment correlation are presented as shown.

Correlation between Labour Mobility and Performance of Counties in western Kenya

Correlations		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(1) Geographical mobility	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	173				
(2) Occupational Mobility	Pearson Correlation	.587**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	173	173			
(3) Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	.496**	.417**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
	N	173	173	173		
(4) Efficiency	Pearson Correlation	.623**	.445**	.638**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
	N	173	173	173	173	
(5) Performance	Pearson Correlation	.546**	.439**	.922**	.769**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	173	173	173	173	173

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

The findings in the Table above indicates that a strong positive correlation between geographical mobility and performance (efficiency) ($r=.623$, $p<.05$) existed. Geographical mobility also positively and significantly correlated with performance (effectiveness) ($r=.496$, $p<.05$) and overall performance ($r=.546$, $p<.05$), with moderate correlations. This infers that, among performance aspects, efficiency is highly associated with geographical mobility as compared to effectiveness or the mean of the two, which is overall performance. The findings further shows that occupational mobility was had a moderate positive significant correlation with efficiency ($r=.445$, $p<.05$), effectiveness ($r=.417$, $p<.05$) and overall performance ($r=.439$, $p<.05$). The meaning is that performance, in terms of effectiveness is significantly related to occupational mobility.

The study's main objective was to determine how labour mobility affects performance of county governments of Western Kenya. The first step towards achieving this objective was to measure the mean of performance, which entails both effectiveness and efficiency and later on regress it on labour mobility aspects, which are occupational and geographical mobility. All the constructs under labour mobility as well as performance of county governments of western Kenya are measured on a five-point Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 =agree and 5 = strongly agree. Therefore, to answer the study objective, a null hypothesis was tested.

The study hypothesis read that "H₀2: Labour mobility has no significant effect on performance of County Governments in Western Kenya", while the study objective was to determine the effect of the labour mobility on performance of county governments of Western Kenya in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Standard multiple linear regression model was carried out. County government performance was regressed against the two aspects of labour mobility, which include occupational and geographical mobility. The model summary results are presented as shown below.

Effect of Labour Mobility on Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change in R Square	Change in F	df1	df2	Sig. Change	F
1	.565 ^a	.319	.311	.76612	.319	39.906	2	170	.000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mean Occupational Movement, Geographical mobility

The findings indicate a positive and significant multiple correlation between the two constructs of labour mobility and performance of county governments of western Kenya ($R=.319$). It is also clear from the model that labour mobility accounts for 31.9% variance in performance of county governments of western Kenya ($R^2 = .319$, $p < .05$). An adjusted R^2 value further indicates that labour mobility accounts for 31.1% variance after shrinkage, or controlling for overestimation or under estimation of the estimate values (Adjusted R^2 value=.311). These findings were significant, or not by chance ($F(2, 170) = 39.906$), but as a result of fitting the model. It can thus be deduced from the findings that labour mobility explains a significant amount of percentage in performance of county governments of western Kenya. It was thus necessary to establish the effect of each of the forms of labour mobility on organizational performance. The findings are presented as follows.

Model Coefficients: Effect of Labour mobility on Performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	(Constant)	.504	.275		1.835	.068
1	Geographical mobility	.558	.099	.440	5.628	.000
	Occupational Mobility	.213	.092	.181	2.315	.022

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

The findings indicate the effects or the contributions of each of the constructs of labour mobility on performance of county governments of western Kenya. The model coefficients clearly indicates that geographical mobility had the highest unique contribution to the performance of the county governments of western Kenya ($\beta=.440$, $p < .05$). This was the variable with the highest significant effect as compared to the other variable, which is occupational mobility.

Occupational mobility was the second, with a positive and significant effect on performance of county governments of Western Kenya. It contributed to the performance by a magnitude of ($\beta=.181$, $p < .05$) which was significant at 0.05. The difference in the level of contributions could be due to the overlapping effect of geographical mobility over occupational mobility. This means that in most cases, employees in the county governments of western Kenya move from one department or location but rarely from one occupation to another. The implication of these findings is that increased transfer of employees from one location to another enhances the performance of the county government of Western Kenya more than it would when transferring them from one occupation to another. Moreover, improved geographical mobility improves performance by a magnitude of 0.440 units. Therefore, a rejection of the null hypothesis was effected, leading the adoption of the alternative hypothesis stating that labour mobility significantly affects performance of county governments.

The above study findings are in line with previous findings on the same, such as Stillman et al (2012), who revealed a positive effect of labour mobility on families, which are not however same as counties. In addition, the previous studies such as Boschma, et al (2009), indicate that there is strong evidence that labour mobility heavily contributes to regional economic growth. Based on these studies and the current findings, a conclusion that labour mobility positively and significantly affects performance was made.

Conclusions

Labour mobility was established to predict performance among counties in western Kenya, in terms of both efficiency and effectiveness. Labour mobility classifications that are geographical and occupational are both significant on their effect on performance, particularly efficiency. In western Kenya, most of the counties practice more of geographical mobility than occupational mobility, and this enhances both effectiveness and efficiency. Contrary to the null hypothesis that labour mobility does not significantly affect performance among counties in Western Kenya, therefore, the alternative hypothesis was adopted and conclusion that labour mobility does have a significant effect on performance of counties in western Kenya was made.

Recommendations

Labour mobility was practiced but still faced challenged especially delays in resignations and transfers. Whereas both aspects positively influence performance, the magnitude of this influence is still low. An improved labour mobility should make the county services more effective and efficient, and therefore the study recommends the counties management to improve on labour mobility practices when it occurs so as to offer improved services to the public in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. The national government should also consider deploying highly skilled and talented employees to the counties for better service delivery as well.

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