

The Effect of On-the –Job-Training Practice on Employee Satisfaction at Kapsara Tea Factory

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of on-the-job training practices on employee satisfaction at Kapsara tea factory Kitale, in Trans-Nzoia County. The prime aim of this study was to find out the tea workers perception on effects of on-the-job training on both male and female workers, in tea production sector. A sample of sixty workers from Kapsara Tea Factory were selected using random sampling technique i.e. Human Resource Managers, line managers, supervisors and junior employees. Among the selected members 35 were male and 25 were female workers. The study used closed-ended questionnaires to get answers of the research questions. The study applied a descriptive research design to establish the relationship between variables. Questionnaires were used to collect data and later on analyzed using inferential statistics and presented in frequency tables.

Data was obtained from data collection process and the findings were analyzed on the basis of the specific objectives of the study. The objective was: To evaluate the effect of On-the –Job-

Training on employee satisfaction at Kapsara tea factory. A sample size of 30 respondents from a population of 60 workers was selected and 30 questionnaires were issued to the respondents. From the data analysis, it was evident that training through mentorship has a great impact on the job satisfaction and retention of the employees. It is essential in keeping employees apt in their work so that they can gain satisfaction from it. The research concluded that training plays a critical role in an organization's employee retention, productivity and job satisfaction. As much as training is crucial in equipping the employees with the necessary skills they need to perform their jobs effectively, it's also essential in developing their loyalty and commitment to an organization hence low employee turnover.

1.1 Key words: Employee satisfaction, Job Rotation, On-the –Job-Training, Retention, Training,

1.2 Introduction

With the current expansion of the global economy and the fast-changing evolution of technology and innovation, organizations are facing an on-going need for employee learning and development. As knowledge increasingly becomes a key factor for productivity, it has also become a currency for competitive success (Mayo, 2009). The resources base approach contends that the organization can develop a sustained competitive advantage only if its activities create value in a unique way, one that competitors cannot easily copy (Barney, 1995). The human capital cannot be easily copied once they acquire the expertise and the necessary skills and knowledge in their workplace. Becker et al (2001) and Hullid (1994), argue that because organizations consider human capital one of the most salient organizational assets in establishing and maintaining a competitive advantage, many are investing considerable resources to support employee and organizational development activities such as a training. Globalization, technological advancements and talent wars in recruiting and retaining high performers, are among the other major reasons that organization seek to leverage training outcomes to foster workplace performance improvement, facilitate development of individual and organizational effectiveness, and establish and maintain market share within the rapidly changing business environment as echoed by Branham (2005).

Employee training and development is one of the major functions of Human Resource Management in any organization. Competent employees will not remain competent forever; some are minimally qualified upon entering the organization and hence require additional training or education. Others enter the organization capable of performing at an optimal level but their skills become obsolete overtime due to technological advances. Even organizational changes and management overtime must ensure that there is appropriate match of individual abilities with organizational needs for the future. Mugwere (2003) argues that organizational and individual learning will ensure there is appropriate match of individual abilities with organizational needs because it provides employees with learning opportunities, develops their capabilities to realize their potential and enhances their employability.

Mugwere (2003) further notes that more employers today are taking advantage of the fact that training strengthens employee commitment. She says, "Few things illustrate a firm's commitment to its employees more than continuing developmental opportunities to better themselves, and such commitment is usually reciprocated", this is the reason why high

commitment firms like Toyota provide about two weeks of training per year for all its employees. This study attempted to provide more insights on how training can enhance this commitment, employee job satisfaction and retention.

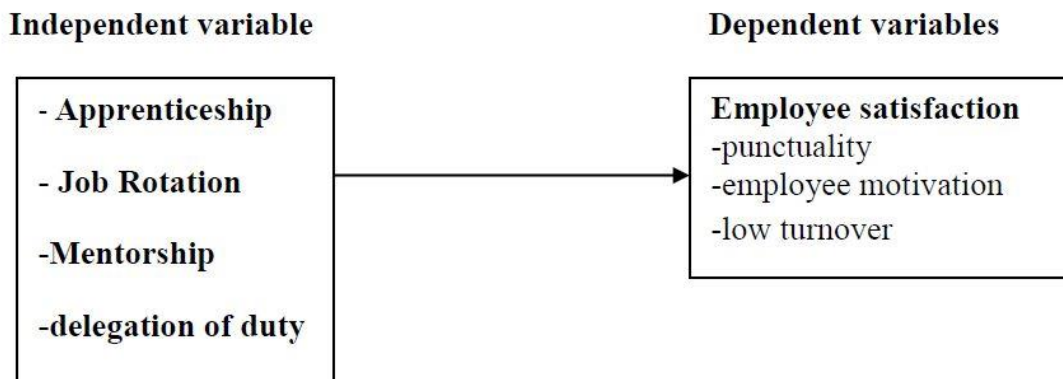
1.3 Literature Review

Armstrong (2000) points out that training is the formal and systematic modification of behaviour through learning which occurs as result of education instruction development and planned experience. The fundamental aim of training is to help the organization achieve its purpose by adding value to its key resources the people it employs. Training means investing in people to enable them to make the best use of their natural abilities. The objectives of training are to develop the skills and competence of employees and improve their performance, help people to grow within the organization and also as far as possible in new job as appointment transfer or promotion and ensure that they become fully competent as quickly and economically as possible. Effective training can minimize learning costs, improve individual, terms and co-operate performance in terms of output, quality speed and overall productivity. To improve operational flexibility by extending the shape of skills possessed by employees (multi-skilling), increases the commitment of employees by encouraging them to identify with the mission and objectives of the organization and to provide high level of services to customer. According to Saleemi (1997) training is the process of increasing knowledge and skills of an employee for doing particular jobs. It is an organized activity designed to create a change in the thinking and behaviour of people and to enable them to carry out their jobs in a more efficient manner (Saleemi at el 1997). Laird (1985) defined training as the acquisition of the technology which permits employees to perform up to standard. Thus training may be defined as an experience, a discipline or a regimen which causes people to acquire new pre-determined behaviors. One of the most powerful benefits of collecting satisfaction data is the ability to analyze service down to the technician level. This gives companies the ability to offer targeted training to employees based on areas needing improvement.

In Kenya training needs are often overlooked to the detriment for both the employer and the employee. The reason for training or not training will depend on the companies training philosophy stated in the training policy. A Training philosophy expresses the degree of importance a company attaches to the training. The following are the main common training philosophy adopted by many organizations: System approach in which companies believe that employees will find what to do for them in regard to training needs. If these companies suffer from a skill shortage it is remedied by recruiting from outside. These organizations are prepared to pay the top market rates for skilled staff, and what they put into recruitment, selection is high compared to the benefits they do not put into training, (Cole 2001).

A model for evaluating effectiveness of training was proposed by Reid & Barrington (1997) as consisting of the following five levels of evaluation; (1) evaluating the training, as in post-course questionnaire (2) evaluating the learning in terms of how the trainee now behaves (3) evaluating changes in job performance (4) evaluating changes in behaviour change (5) evaluating changes in the wider contribution that the organization now makes.

Conceptual Framework



In this research, as the conceptual framework showed, there were two variables under investigation. The independent variable was on-the-job training while the dependent variable was employees' satisfaction. For purposes of this study, the constructs considered for on-the-job training were apprenticeship, job rotation, mentorship, and delegation of duty. The constructs considered for the dependent variable included: low employee turnover, punctuality, employee motivation and job satisfaction.

1.3.1 Variables Overview

Apprenticeship – on –the-job - training

The most widely used training method takes place on the job. OJT refers to new or inexperienced employee learning through observing peers or managers performing the job and trying to imitate their behaviour. Noe (2002) defines OJT as training that is planned and structured and takes place mainly at the normal workstations of the trainee although some instructions may be provided in a special training area on site-and where a manager, supervisor, trainer or peer colleague spends significant time with a trainer to teach a set of skills that have been specified in advance. It also includes a period of instructions where there may be little or no useful outputs in terms of productivity.

According to a report for the Apprenticeship ambassador's network by Torrance Hogarth et al (2008) Apprenticeship has benefits to both the employer and the employee. Apprenticeship increases productivity since motivated and highly trained workers produce better products, have better work habits and are absent less often. Apprenticeship also increases worker safety, reduces labor turnover, create a versatile workforce and provided employers with employees who can adapt to new technologies.

Job Rotation

Job rotation aims at broadening experience by moving people from job to job or department to department. It can be inefficient and frustrating method of acquiring additional knowledge and skills unless it is carefully planned or controlled. Recruits into management training programs

have often passed through a brief phase of job rotation before moving into a specific function such as human resource management, marketing or production. This is now being extended to many organizations as the value of flexibility is realized. This is a strong feature of the Japanese style of OJT management development. Such approach may involve transfer, job rotation, inside or outside the organization. Trainees in locations where no one knows what to do with them mainly attribute criticism on the method to wastage of time. The term 'planned sequence of experience,' is preferred to 'job rotation' to emphasize that the experience should be programmed to satisfy a learning specification for acquiring knowledge and skills in different departments and occupations. Success in using this method depends on designing a programme, which sets down what trainees are expected to learn in each department or in which they gain experience, (Armstrong, 2010).

Job rotation is a system where employees work at several jobs in an organization performing each job for relatively short period of time. Job rotation involves the movement of employees through a range of jobs in order to increase interest and motivation. Job rotation is a method used for employee's development. For it to be successful it must start with an end goal, must be carefully planned and both employees and organization must benefit from it. (Armstrong, 2010).

Mentorship

Mentoring is the process of using specially selected and trained individuals to provide guidance and advice, which will help to develop the careers of the protégés, allocated to them. Mentoring is aimed at complementing OJT, which must always be the best way of acquiring the particular skills and knowledge the job holder needs. Mentoring also complements formal training by providing those who benefit from it with individual guidance from experienced managers who are 'wise' in the ways of the organization, (Armstrong 2003).

Mentoring is useful in the succession planning, but its success is dependent on the quality of the relationship and on the seniors tutoring abilities. A major disadvantage of mentoring is that it can be time consuming for senior managers; it is important that mentors are themselves given training as the role is particularly demanding and complicated requiring excellent interpersonal skills. There is also the issue of finding appropriate mentors for women managers given them under representation in senior management and possible differences in management styles between women and men managers.

Employees Satisfaction

"It is a terminology used to describe whether employees are happy and contented in fulfilling their needs at work. It is a factor in employee motivation, employee goal achievement and positive employee morale in the work place" (Armstrong, 2012). She further argues that, apart from OJT, treating employees with respect, employees' recognition, empowering employees, brand name of the organization, aims and objectives of the organization, salary and wages, reward, working environment and above all training and development opportunities are factors to be considered for employees' satisfaction.

Employees want to know that their employers recognize their achievements in the workplace. They need to feel appreciated as workers and as people (Branham, 2005). Employee satisfaction has got benefits to both employees and organization. Employees satisfaction helps the organization to retain its employee, overall productivity of the company is improved, there will be a good customer relation hence customers' satisfaction achieved, company gets better services and products from its employees. When an employee is satisfied, he or she will take interest in the work instead of worrying about their issues, employees feels a sense of responsibility towards the organization, employees will build great relationship with customer and would work harder so as to be appreciated by the organization.

According to Branham (2005), failure to provide employees with opportunity to grow within the company results in employee frustration. Barriers within the company may prevent some employees from reaching their potentials. Happiness in the work place lead to much higher levels of productivity, increase employee morale, therefore employees are more willing to work harder to improve the company and its goals.

1.4 Research Methods

The study used descriptive design to carry out the investigation. A descriptive research design aimed at describing the distribution of a phenomenon in a population and thereby establishing the facts. The descriptive design was chosen because it provides great depth of responses resulting in better and elaborates understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Branham, 2005),

The study targeted 60 key informants like the Human Resource Manager, line managers and supervisors and junior employees who were perceived to have an understanding of the operations of the industry. the researcher used simple random sampling to select respondents. A sample size of 50% respondents; equivalent to 30 employees in the four departments was randomly selected to participate in the study. This number was considered sufficient since it was above the recommended 30% as advanced by Gupta and Gupta to select a sample for which was generally regarded as the minimum sample size. A simple random sampling method within each department was employed so as to give each employee a chance to participate in the study.

This study used questionnaires as the primary instrument of data collection. The structured (closed-ended) questionnaires were used so as to get the uniform responses from given respondents. The structured questionnaires were accompanied by a list of all possible alternatives from which respondents selected the suitable answer that best described their situation by simply ticking. unstructured interview schedules were also used to collect the data. A drop and pick technique was used in the administration of the questionnaires. Literature review was used as the secondary source of data.

1.5 Findings

From the data analysis, it was evident that training had a great impact on the job satisfaction and retention of the employees. Training is essential in keeping employees apt in their work so that they can gain satisfaction from it. This is so because expertise motivates staff to be creative and innovative and through this, breakthroughs could be achieved and on the basis of this

research scientific breakthroughs. When the employees get satisfied with their work, they tend to commit themselves to the work and also to the employer and therefore tend to stick with the employer for long. Chances of them leaving the employment to other places are therefore minimal. The highlights of the major findings were as follows: -

Training to employees- Training is very valuable to employees because it helps increase their competence and efficiency at work hence increasing on work performance hence satisfaction. Good performance at work as well as competence tends to bring satisfaction in terms of job to the employee.

Need to invest in training- There is need to invest in training in the Company and training which is relevant to the employee type of work. It is evident that innovation keeps on changing and therefore employees' need to keep updating themselves in order to meet the challenges of the new innovations. Employees also expect the employer to invest in their training for them to feel appreciated in terms of work and to gain additional skills and knowledge. This is unlike the high percentage 30% of employees who sponsored themselves in various training programmes.

Training sponsorship- quite a number of the employees funded themselves for the training programmes. This is a sign of the value the employee places on training. The employer needs to be more supportive in training the employees by providing more finances and time.

Criterion of selecting those to train- the company embraced the random selection criteria as a mode of identifying those to be training regardless of their academic qualification or years of service. The company needs to have in place a stratified procedure of identification to ensure certainty of training opportunities hence retention and satisfaction.

Training Development Policy- it was commendable that the company had in place a training policy in place as evidenced by the 90% affirmative responses. This should be maintained as it acts as a motivation to employee as they wait for their turn thus satisfaction.

Training method- delegated duty and job rotation was identified as the best on the job training method as it gives employees a hands experience and thus motivated. When they were asked on how mentorship contributed to employee satisfaction, 50% strongly agreed, 45% agreed and a paltry 15% disagreed.

The duration of time before rewards is given. Once employees achieve higher training, they expect to be rewarded in the form of promotions, salary increment, and additional responsibility among others. For promotion and salary increment, employees expect to be rewarded either immediately or at least in less than a year's time. Unfortunately, it took the company up to two years to promote its employees despite the fact that they offered them training within a year. Therefore, failure to mitigate duration for training and promotion leads them satisfaction.

Employee training and performance: employee training added value to employees 'competencies and thus increased performance. Gaining more knowledge and skills is also a great motivator to the employee to pursue higher learning as is their promotion and chances for future promotions. Failure of these on job training schemes to be fulfilled and rewards given after training will bring discontent to the employee hence job dissatisfaction and retention.

1.6 Conclusion

- I. The research concluded that apprenticeship as a technique of training played a role in an organization's employee's retention, and job satisfaction. As much as training is crucial in equipping the employees with the necessary skills they need to perform their jobs effectively, it is also essential in developing their loyalty and commitment to an organization hence low employee turnover.
- II. From the study it was found that the job rotation was one of the motivators of employees' job satisfaction. That, the reward which employees expected from their employer after training was promotion and salary increment. It came out clear that employees usually have pre-set expectations resulting from acquiring higher training in which promotion and salary increment are among them and the most important to the employee. Thus employers should endeavour to reward the employees they identify for training so that there is a correlation between training and reward.
- III. It was concluded that to a small degree, mentoring can be used as a form of on-the-training technique as a small percentage of the employees were convinced that it is not the best method to train employee and in so doing help to enhance the employer-employee relationship loyalty, commitment and thus achieving the long-term objectives of the organization.
- IV. Finally, it was concluded that delegation was the best on-the-job training practice. They felt that with delegation, their experiences have a platform to be put to task as they reduce the excessive burden on superior thus providing opportunities for growth and self-development to junior employee. This goes along way into creating a team of experienced and mature manager for the organization thus, a chance for upward career progression.

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