

## Employee Training and Delivery of Services at the Postal Corporation of Kenya

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** Service delivery is an essential aspect for an organization to gain competitive advantage, since service delivery deals with how a service or a product is delivered to the client and whether it's fairly or unfairly done hence determining prosperity or downfall of organization. A sure way of realizing full potential of an organization is use relevant human resource development mechanisms appropriately. Human resource development mechanisms describe an organization's strategies of investing in activities and programs that are intended to develop competence, skills, and knowledge of employees. The study aimed to examine possible association between employee training efforts and service delivery in Postal Corporation of Kenya in Nairobi.

**Methods:** The study is anchored on SERVIQAL model and it deployed a positive research philosophy paradigm and quantitative research design, targeting a population of 400 respondents comprising 300 employees and 100 clients, 40% sample size is obtained from target population translating to 160 respondents.

**Results:** Key finding of the study was that employee training is a significant determinant of service delivery at Postal Corporation of Kenya. As such, the corporation's efforts at enhancing the capacity of its employees were established to be significantly linked to the quality of the corporation's services.

**Conclusion:** The study recommends deliberate planning and enhancement of the employees' skills and knowledge to ensure continued competitiveness of the corporation.

**Keywords:** *Service delivery, employee training, Postal Corporation*

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### 1.0 Introduction

Due to globalization, the current business environment has been characterized by an increase in a number of competitors both locally and internationally. Therefore, for organizations to survive in the highly competitive business environment service delivery is a very essential aspect for organizations to gain competitive advantage. Abdul (2015) noted that service delivery is concerned with where, when, and how a service product is delivered to a client or customer and whether it's fairly or unfairly done. Service delivery defines not only how but also what of a service design hence mediating between customers' needs and organizational strategy (Mohammad et al., 2023).

Hannah and Peter (2020) in their work noted that training is a very significant aspect of service delivery in that it helps in enabling an organization to achieve its organizational goals and

objectives by adding value to its human resources which is key to organizational operations and also empower employees to be able to utilize their natural abilities optimally for purposes of better performance. For those employees who are on the frontline of service delivery and are in close contact with clients, they are greatly in need of training if an organization has to achieve the expected quality and standard service delivery (Turyadi et al., 2023). The opportunities to acquire new skills and enhance the old ones tend to bring about professional confidence among employees who have undergone proper training (Mthokozisi & Clifford, 2015).

According to Abdul (2015), training plays a very significant role in promoting quality service delivery therefore training cannot be neglected in this case. Training provides employees with an opportunity for continuous learning hence allowing employees to directly advance their professional abilities, knowledge, and skills for better delivery of services to the customers. Training results in employee commitment to service quality and development of a positive service climate within an organization. Through training, an organization can realize efficiency in its functioning in relation to the set Government regulations as well as having competent employees. Employers should then develop employee training programs according to their job descriptions and other relevant categorizations.

When an organization has enough resources this plays a significant role in determining the service delivery of the organization since the organizational resources can be utilized to ensure the correct HRD mechanisms such as; relevant training of employees, employee welfare activities, timely feedback on tasks within the organization, efficiency of the organizational reward system as well as relevant technological environment are put in place which will in this case enable the employee to have good attitude towards their work hence customer satisfaction with the service delivery of the organization (Kaur et al., 2020).

Globally the world's economic order has been transformed due to economic globalization, hence bringing about new business challenges and opportunities. Customers are becoming more complex, segmented, and refined as well as expecting more as far as product or service customization, uniqueness, price, and quality are concerned. According to Abhina (2016), quality of service provision greatly depends on the provider's expertise. Therefore, organizations need to pay extra attention to the commitment and expertise of the people to assign the duty of providing their services. The organization can also enhance such virtues in their employees and build their capacities through proper training programs and ongoing mentorship.

To address the challenges facing service delivery in most organizations human resource development is highly significant. Metcalfe and Makarem (2024) argue that HRD focus in Africa is more often framed at the national as well as regional level. In Sab-Saharan Africa HRD indicators place Sab-Saharan Africa at the lower quartile of countries as compared to other regions in the world. This could be attributed to factors such as corrupt political regimes, high poverty levels as well as underdevelopment, partially functioning educational systems as well as health demand, and general human well-being. There is an increase in the need for HRD mechanisms such as training and development in sub-Saharan Africa, more so characterized by unstable economies and high unemployment that have created many challenges on many levels.

In Kenya, Kenyan Government has continuously struggled with the challenge of poor service delivery in the public sector. For instance, due to poor service delivery within the public sector, Kenyan Government in the early 1990s resolved to a number of interventions among which

included; retrenchment of more than one hundred thousand civil servants a resolution that went with little impact on the quality of services within the civil service (Barongo et al., 2018). In addition, the Kenyan Government in the year 2004 introduced result-oriented management, using performance contracting tools as a way of improving public service delivery. This meant that all public services were to work towards set targets, come up with service charters with their clients as well and make a comparison between their performance and the best worldwide (Bawono, 2021).

Effective service delivery in state parastatals such as the national transport and safety authority has been affected due to inadequate strategies in formulating and absorbing development funds. Hence, sound leadership, review, and implementation of strategic policies have been hindered (Karanja & Juma, 2020). Service providers such as Kenya Power have also been of great concern to the public. Members of the public have raised concerns about the consistency and reliability of the power supply due to unexpected interruptions, haphazard power surges in addition to rationing among other scheduled interruptions in the power supply across the country (Francis, 2015).

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 SERVQUAL Model**

Parasuraman et al. (1985) first developed the SERVIQUAL model, which is a quality model that is also known as Rater model. The model is a method of capturing and measuring the quality of service as experienced by a customer (Hannah & Peter, 2020). The model gave five dimensions that describe the quality of service which include the following: reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy as well as responsiveness, which in this case implies that there exists a gap between the services offered by the service providers and the customer expectations. It is therefore important for services to be not only selected but also be managed with a lot of care to be able to maintain a good reputation (Philip et al., 2015).

Abdullah and Kasmi (2021) noted that SERVQUAL allows providers with a similar output to provide greater value, competitiveness, opportunities for growth in services, and an increase in customer satisfaction. Therefore, a better understanding of customer's perceptions as well as expectations is a prerequisite for delivering high-quality services according to their expectation (Wæraas & Dahle, 2020).

According to Grace and Makori (2016), for an organization to be able to create customer value, service providers must ensure that the kind of services they offer to their clients is of high quality; never the less employees hold a stake in determining the quality of services they offer to their clients, therefore a number of measures need to be taken to altogether to ensure that employees are empowered enough to attend to their duties with diligence as well as remaining customer focused.

Hannah and Peter (2020), describe employee training to be a powerful tool in empowering an employee to utilize their natural abilities optimally for better performance through service delivery. However, training has to be done in line with the organizational goals and objectives, hence enabling organizations to realize their intended objectives and goals. Therefore, this theory serves as the main anchor of the study by supporting the dependent variable which is service delivery which will be measured by the use of indicators such as tangibility, assurance reliability as well as empathy hence it is the main theory in this study.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

Due to the challenge of technological advancement that organizations face day in and day out regular training would play a significant role in minimizing such challenges. Training also plays a very significant role in ensuring quality service delivery by enabling an organization to achieve its intended goal and objectives by adding value to its human resources which is key when it comes to daily operations of the organization by empowering the employees to utilize their natural abilities optimally for better performance through service delivery (Hannah & Peter, 2020). Similarly, career progression initiatives are taken by organizations as a way of safeguarding the future of the organization as well as providing employees with the long-term expectations of the organizations in terms of offering quality services into the organization's future.

According to a study by Mthokozisi and Clifford (2015), there is a direct link between service delivery and employee training. The researchers examined the possibility of improving employee performance through quality training and development of organizations' employees. They observed that profitability of organizations becomes the eventual outcome of quality employee development programs. Therefore, training programs and training activities in organizations need to be aligned with employees' learning, attitude, and behavior change due to its great impact on service delivery hence the organizational growth and performance. This means that managers can have confidence in their employee hence creating room for task delegation.

Study findings established that an organization could improve performance of its employees by adopting an effective system to ensure proper development and training of the employees. This can in turn lead to improvement in basic service provision to the communities. However, there is a need to increase the number of employees taking part in training and development as a way of improving performance and service delivery. The study only concentrated on training and development as an independent variable hence presenting a conceptual gap that could be filled using other study variables (Mthokozisi & Clifford, 2015).

## **3.0 Methodology**

The study used a quantitative research design that targeted a population of postal employees in Nairobi county serving in eleven major departments namely; corporate communication directorate, courier and parcels directorate, internal audit and risk directorate, ICT directorate, finance service directorate, HR directorate, mail services directorate, payment service directorate, legal service directorate, supply chain directorate, security and compliance directorate with a total number of 300 employees being targeted in the study. This study adopted the use of regression model due to its appropriateness in testing effects of group-independent variables. The study adapted regression model to predict the effect of employee training on service delivery in a postal corporation of Kenya in Nairobi County.

## **4.0 Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 Descriptive Statistics**

The analyses intended to establish and present the prevailing status of the Postal Corporation of Kenya with regard to its service delivery from the respondents' viewpoints. The objective was pursued through multiple statements which were posed to the sampled employees of the corporation to indicate their levels of agreement on a Likert scale where 1 represents "Strongly Agree", 2 represents "Agree", 3 represents "Disagree", and 4 represents "Strongly Disagree".

Their responses for each of the statements were then presented in terms of percentage of the respondents with their respective levels of agreement as well as the mean agreement and standard deviation for each of the statements. The mean agreement is computed by summing the products of each level of the scale and the number of respondents in each category then dividing the results by the total number of the respondents. The analyses are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Training of employees and service delivery in the postal corporation of Kenya.**

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	Mean	SD
I have been allocated duties within my area of specialization	59	44.0	45	33.6	16	11.9	14	10.4	2.0	1.0
Duties allocated to me have enabled me to widen my knowledge and work experience	46	34.1	61	45.2	17	12.6	11	8.1	2.1	1.2
I have been learning from duties delegated to me	30	22.2	59	43.7	27	20.0	19	14.1	2.2	1.0
My seniors have been of great influence in determining my success at work	35	25.9	64	47.4	15	11.1	21	15.6	2.3	1.0
I have participated in more than two deliberation committees	19	14.1	55	40.7	35	25.9	26	19.3	3.1	1.1
Organization sponsored me for formal training	27	20.0	58	43.0	33	24.4	17	12.6	2.3	1.3
Training received has widened my knowledge in areas of specialization	33	24.4	56	41.5	27	20.0	19	14.1	2.1	1.1
Training received has had a positive impact on my attitude to my work as an employee	35	25.9	57	42.2	29	21.5	14	10.4	2.0	1.4

The reports tabulated above indicate that respondents agree to all the statements about the training practices at PCK except for their participation on more than two deliberation committees. To start with, a majority (44.0%) of the employees strongly agreed that they are allocated duties within their area of specialization. As such they have at least basic formal training to facilitate their delivery of services as confirmed by the mean agreement of 2 and standard deviation of 1. The finding confirms a study by Blom and Uwizeyimana (2020) that pointed out that formal education among employees is necessary for delivery of good services among public servants in South Africa.

The training avenue for every employee is learning through the assigned and delegated duties. As such, 45.2% and 43.7% of the sampled employees agreed that they have been learning from their assigned duties and delegated responsibilities respectively. Even though the respondents have uniform mean agreement ( $M = 2.1$ ) and standard deviation ( $SD = 1.0$ ), a smaller number of them may have had an opportunity to perform delegated duties as evidenced by 14.1% of them who expressed strong disagreement with the statement that they have been able to learn from delegated duties. This observation is in line with Kessy (2023) that delegation is an occasional opportunity that not every employee of an organization gets the privilege to hold.

The same trend is observed in the employees’ response to the statement on their opportunity to participate in more than two deliberation committees. A relatively lower number (40.7%) of them agreed with the statement while the mean agreement of 3.1 (SD = 1.1) indicates that a randomly selected employee at PCK is likely not to have participated in multiple deliberation committees. This further affirms the observation that such special opportunities are available to limited members of an organization (Kessy, 2023). On whether their seniors had been of great influence in determining their success at work, 47.4% of the respondents agreed (M = 2.3; SD = 1.0). The finding speaks to training role played by senior members of an organization as mentors and influencers of the employees working alongside them as was proposed by Al-Kassem (2021).

Additionally, the respondents were asked if the company had sponsored them for a formal training program. 43.0% of the expressed agreement with a mean of 2.3 and a standard deviation of 1.3. The results suggest that formal training is one of the major staff development priorities within the PCK as was also noted by Wamuyu (2020). This is further supported by 41.5% of the respondents who indicated that their knowledge in the areas of specialization had been widened by the formal training. Similarly, 42.2% of them acknowledged the positive impact of formal training on their attitude towards their work. As such, formal training of the employees plays a key role in the delivery of services at PCK.

#### 4.2 Hypothesis Testing

The study applied regression analyses through which three main inferential statistics namely Pearson Correlation (R), F- value, and the P – value were used to guide whether to reject or not reject null hypotheses discussed as follows;

#### **H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between employee training and service delivery in Postal Corporation of Kenya.**

To test the above hypothesis, measures of employee training at PCK are regressed against measures of corporation’s service delivery. This analysis allows a researcher to observe extent to which measures of employee training predict delivery of services at PCK as shown by Tables 2 and 3;

**Table 2: Model Summary: Employee training and service delivery in Postal Corporation of Kenya**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.553 <sup>a</sup>	.306	.300	.48926

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Training

**Table 3: ANOVA: Employee training and service delivery in Postal Corporation of Kenya**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	13.901	1	13.901	58.072	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	31.597	132	.239		
Total	45.498	133			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Training

Results shown in the tables analysis show service delivery as positively and significantly linked to employee training ( $R = .553$ ,  $Sig = .000$ ). Therefore, this research rejects null hypothesis that no significant relationship between employee training and service delivery in Postal Corporation of Kenya at 95% Confidence Interval (CI). This implies that increasing or decreasing the corporation's investment in training their employees by one unit would cause an equivalent change in their level of service delivery. Hence, at  $P < 0.000$  level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. The implication is that employee training has a significant effect on service delivery in Postal Corporation of Kenya. In guideline of generated statistical indicators, study concludes presence of a positive significant statistical link between Postal Corporation of Kenya's training of employee training and delivery of their services.

## 5.0 Conclusion

The study objective sought to establish effect of training on delivery of services in Postal Corporation of Kenya. From regression analysis results obtained showed that employee training has a significant effect on service delivery in Postal Corporation of Kenya. Employee training variable entailed the activities and policies of the corporation that are aimed at enhancing skills and knowledge of the employees. They included delegation of duties to employees, deployment of the employees to assistant positions, their appointments in different committees, and provision of opportunities to gain formal training. The study established appreciable availability of such learning opportunities according to a majority of the sampled respondents. The study concluded that there was a statistically significant effect of employee training on the quality of services provided by Postal Corporation of Kenya.

## 6.0 Recommendations

Since employee training, as HRD mechanisms was established to have significant effects on the quality of the corporation's services, the study recommends deliberate planning for sound implementation of strategies to enhance training of its employees for sustained provision of quality services. Management of the Postal Corporation of Kenya should prioritize employee training programs to make the corporation more competitive and relevant to the prevailing market.

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